From 1974 to 2010, the New Netherland Project translated and transcribed over 7,000 pages of Dutch-language administrative records from the archives of New Netherland, now in the collections of the New York State Archives and Albany County Hall of Records. The New Netherland Research Center continues this work to the present. The translations have been published in twelve books as part of the *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch / New Netherland Documents* series. The introductions to these books are printed below.

New Netherland’s central archive was housed at New Amsterdam and comprised fifty or more books that contained a wide variety of records. An inventory of these books conducted in 1820 listed and briefly described 49 books, 47 of them labeled A–Z and AA–PP (some alphabetic designations were duplicated). This arrangement survived until the middle of the nineteenth-century when E.B. O’Callaghan, as custodian of historical manuscripts for the state of New York, decided that they could be more logically organized. O’Callaghan proceeded to reorganize the individual documents according to genre: The original books and some loose papers became 23 volumes, each containing a specific type of document. He then compiled a calendar that cited the documents according to volume and page number.

Despite being subjected to myriad dangers over their more than 300 years, this body of records has largely survived. However, important gaps were noted by O’Callaghan in his *Calendar*, and subsequently by New York State

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1 Early volumes were published in the series *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch*. With the *Curacao Papers* in 1987, the series was renamed the *New Netherland Documents* series.
2 *Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1638–1642* predated the New Netherland Project and includes an introduction by Peter Christoph. All other introductions are by Charles T. Gehring, with the exception of *Fort Orange Records, 1654–1679*, by Charles T. Gehring and Janny Venema, and *Curacao Papers, 1640–1665*, by Charles T. Gehring and Jacob Schiltkamp.
3 This inventory is printed in *New York Legislative Documents*, 43rd. session, 1820, No. 2 under the title “A Catalogue of the Records in the Office of the Secretary of State of New-York, on the first day of January, 1820.” Its appendix includes several excerpts from historical documents explaining possible incidents of loss.
4 For a detailed description of O’Callaghan’s rearrangement, see the introduction to Volume XVI, part 1, *Laws & Writs of Appeal, 1647–1663*. 
archivist and translator A.J.F. van Laer.

O’Callaghan’s *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State; Part 1: Dutch Manuscripts, 1630–1664*, is available [here](#).

Van Laer’s *The Translation and Publication of the Manuscript Dutch Records of New Netherland, With an Account of Previous Attempts at Translation* is available [here](#).

With some exceptions—including several Fort Orange records not included in the *Calendar*—the translations in the *New York Historical Manuscripts / New Netherland Documents* series follow the *Calendar* arrangement, which is listed below in bold-type. Beneath each entry is publication information for the corresponding translation. Follow the hyperlinks in blue for translations, transcriptions, and manuscript images where available. For a list organized by translation with the corresponding manuscript arrangement below, see the appendix.

**Volume I: Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1638–1642**
   Published as same.

**Volume II: Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1642–1647**
   Published as same.

**Volume III: Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1648–1660**
   Published as same.

**Volume IV: Council Minutes, 1638–1649**
   Published as same.

**Volume V: Council Minutes, 1652–1654**
   Published as same.

**Volume VI: Council Minutes, 1655–1656**
   Published as same.

**Volume VII: Council Minutes**
   Entries in this volume are duplicated in volumes VI and VIII.

**Volume VIII: Council Minutes, 1656–1658**
   Translation in process.

**Volume IX: Council Minutes, 1660–1661**
Translation in process.

**Volume X: Council Minutes, 1661–1665 (in 3 parts)**
Translation in process.

**Volume XI: Correspondence, 1647–1653**
Published as same.

**Volume XII: Correspondence, 1654–1658**
Published as same.

**Volume XIII: Correspondence, 1659–1660**
Translation in process.

**Volume XIV: Correspondence, 1661–1662**
Translation in process.

**Volume XV: Correspondence, 1663–1664**
Translation in process.

**Volume XVI**

**Part I: Ordinances, 1647–1658**
Grouped with part IV of the same volume: published as *Volume XVI, part 1, Laws & Writs of Appeal, 1647–1663.*

**Part II: Fort Orange Records, 1656–1657**
Grouped with part III of the same volume and two volumes (1652–1656 and 1658–1659) housed at the Albany County Hall of Records: published as *Volume XVI, part 2, Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652–1660.*

**Part III: Fort Orange Records, 1660**
Grouped with part II of the same volume and two volumes (1652–1656 & 1658–1659) housed at the Albany County Hall of Records: published as *Volume XVI, part 2, Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652–1660.*

**Part IV: Writs of Appeal, 1658–1663**
Grouped with part I of the same volume: published as *Volume XVI, part 1, Laws & Writs of Appeal, 1647–1663.*

**Volume XVII: Curacao Papers, 1640–1665**
Published as same.

**Volume XVIII: Delaware Papers, 1648–1660**

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5  Part I: 1661–1662; Part II: 1663; Part III: 1664–1665
6  Not included in the Calendar.
7  Included in the Calendar under Volume XVI, part II, Volume A.
8  Not included in the Calendar.
9  Included in the Calendar under Volume XVI, part II, Volume A.
Grouped with Volume XIX: published as *Delaware Papers, Dutch Period, 1648–1664*.

**Volume XIX: Delaware Papers, 1661–1664**

Grouped with Volume XVIII: published as *Delaware Papers, Dutch Period, 1648–1664*.

**Volume XX: Delaware Papers, 1664–1678**


**Volume XXI: Delaware Papers, 1679–1682**

Grouped with Volume XX: published as *Delaware Papers, English Period, 1664–1682*.

**Book GG: Patents**

Grouped with Books HH and II: published as *Land Papers, 1630–1664*.

**Book HH, part I: Deeds**

Originally Book II, this was grouped with books GG and HH: published as *Land Papers, 1630–1664*.

**Book HH, part II: Patents**

Originally book HH, this was grouped with Books GG and II: published as *Land Papers, 1630–1664*.

Not included in the Calendar but part of the *New York Historical Manuscripts / New Netherland Documents* series are *Fort Orange Records, 1656–1678* and *Fort Orange Records, 1654–1679*. These publications comprise two bound volumes of records stored at the Albany County Hall of Records labeled Deeds A and B respectively.
The government of New Netherland was established in 1624 by the West India Company. In 1626 a Director-General was appointed, who was assisted in his duties by a Council and a Provincial Secretary. The publication of the records of the Council and the Provincial Secretary is therefore of the greatest importance to students of the early history of the European settlements in America.

The present publication is a translation of all the existing Registers of the Provincial Secretary and of the earliest surviving volume of Council Minutes. Unfortunately, records in these series prior to the administration of Director-General Willem Kieft are lost; his predecessor, Wouter van Twiller, may have turned the earlier records over to the West India Company, whose records were destroyed in the nineteenth century.

That any records survive at all is a wonder, for the archives of New Netherland have led a precarious existence, and one worth recounting in brief. After the British conquest in 1664, the Provincial Secretary turned the archives over to the new government. They returned to Dutch control when the province of New York was captured in 1673, and in the following year the colony and its records reverted to the British. The New York Historical Manuscripts, Dutch and British, remained with the secretary of the colony until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, when they were placed in the home of a New York City alderman. They were removed to Kingston in June 1776 by the Provincial Congress, and at the end of the war were sent to the Secretary of State in New York City. When Albany became the State capital the records were moved to the Secretary’s new office there.

About 1850 the Secretary engaged Dr. E. B. O’Callaghan to rearrange forty-six volumes of the Dutch records, which were rebound in twenty volumes. The arrangement of an additional two volumes of land patents and deeds was not altered. In 1881 the twenty-two volumes were transferred to the Manuscripts Division of the State Library, along with translations by Francis A. Van der Kemp and E. B. O’Callaghan.

A. J. F. van Laer reviewed the available translations in a 1910 Education Department bulletin. He found Van der Kemp’s work “so poor that it need not be considered at all,” and Berthold Fernow’s efforts, which had been published in volumes 12–14 of *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of*...
New York, were termed “unsatisfactory.” O’Callaghan’s translation contained errors both of “omission and commission” and the language was “at times unnecessarily strained,” but it was “a vast improvement on the translations of Van der Kemp.” O’Callaghan had prepared manuscript translations of volumes 1–4 of the records which with “comparatively little labor could be prepared for publication.”

Van Laer and his assistant, Peter Nelson, began the “comparatively little labor” in 1910.

A. J. F. van Laer had unique abilities as a translator. He understood Dutch idioms and obscure words and usages of the seventeenth century. He was able to decipher the meanings of misspelled words and ungrammatical constructions, and he recognized the possibility of clerical copying errors. He read seventeenth-century handwriting easily, and he was not deterred by faded ink or paper which had crumbled or had been stained, burned and water-soaked. Further, he was able to recreate the style of colonial Dutch writers in modern English. He took great care to capture the exact sense of each passage, and wherever the sense was difficult to render in English he would provide a note of explanation. Yet so great was his command of both languages that such instances are rare.

The translation of the first Register of the Provincial Secretary was nearly completed when the State Library burned on March 29, 1911. The Register was destroyed, and with it the nearly completed translation and two-thirds of the Dutch transcription. Of the other Dutch archives, seventeen volumes were in good condition and four suffered partial destruction. Van der Kemp’s translation was gone, but O’Callaghan’s had survived.

Little would have survived had not van Laer and historian I. N. Phelps Stokes begun searching the ruins within two days of the conflagration. Fires were still burning, and Stokes was twice overcome with smoke. Stone and brick fell about them, and water poured down. The smouldering manuscripts were placed in clothes baskets requisitioned from a nearby laundry and passed along a chain composed of library staff and National Guardsmen. For days van Laer sorted through the rubble in the Capitol until he was convinced that nothing more could be saved.1

What was left of the State Library’s collections was moved into new quarters in the State Education Building in August 1912, and there the New York Historical Manuscripts have remained. Their next journey will be some three years hence, when the Library will move to the new Cultural Center.

1 A detailed account of the rescue operations after the fire appears in A History of the New York State Library by Cecil R. Roseberry.
Van Laer was soon back at work on the translations. He referred to the original documents if they still existed, and to other copies and translations if they did not. To ease the task of later researchers he prepared a transcript of the Dutch text. He added footnotes to the translation to explain obscure points and to provide biographical data on many of the persons mentioned.

Other projects began to intrude upon van Laer’s time: in February 1914 he was revising E. T. Corwin’s index to the *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York*, and in August he suspended the New York Historical Manuscripts project in order to revise Jonathan Pearson’s translation of early Albany records. He returned to the translation of the New York Historical Manuscripts in 1916. By April 1918 the work was nearly completed, but there the project halted for lack of funds to publish. Other projects drew van Laer’s attention, and it was not until shortly before his retirement in 1939 that he had the present typescript prepared.

Van Laer’s retirement from State service did not signal the end of his work, however. In 1946 the New York Public Library published *The Lutheran Church in New York, 1649–1772*, his translation of documents located in the Lutheran Church Archives in Amsterdam, Holland. Since this book does not appear on the list of State publications, it is sometimes overlooked, and its existence is worth noting.

A. J. F. van Laer spent the early part of his career in the Manuscripts Division of the State Library, in 1916 he was transferred to the Division of Archives and History. The Division turned over van Laer’s papers, including the typescript of the New York Historical Manuscripts, to the State Library in 1967. Up to that time these documents were known principally through E. B. O’Callaghan’s *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State: Dutch*, Albany, New York (1865). The numbers assigned to the documents by O’Callaghan have been used for indexing these volumes.

This publication has become a reality through the efforts of Mr. Ralph L. DeGroff, Dr. Kenn Stryker-Rodda, Dr. Kenneth Scott, and Mrs. Gano R. Bailey.

One may well ask what purpose will be served by the publication of these ancient records. And the reply is that they help to fill a gap in our knowledge of the origins of American government, commerce, and society. Let us consider briefly the nature of the records and the meaning that can be derived from them.

The Council Minutes are a record of executive, legislative, and judicial activities. The Council created laws and assisted the Director-General in carrying them out. It also served as a judicial panel, hearing all cases in which
capital punishment could be invoked and reviewing decisions of lower courts on appeal, as well as serving as the local court for the New Amsterdam area. The Council Minutes are, therefore, of importance both for the study of the nature of colonial government and the study of criminal activity in the province.

The Registers of the Provincial Secretary contain court depositions, bonds, deeds, leases, and other legal declarations and agreements which had to be filed with the Secretary. The Registers are of value as source material for economic and social history, and they provide the legal basis for land titles.

Van Laer once expressed the opinion that the English people sought freedom for groups, while the Dutch emphasized freedom for the individual. The history of New Netherland does show a marked tension between a sometimes repressive government and a free-minded populace. The development of the American concept of the meaning of democracy may well have had its beginning in New Netherland.

The colony was established as a commercial enterprise. The historian of economics will be richly rewarded with information on the West India Company and on individual entrepreneurs. Furs and flour were exported; a variety of manufactured goods flowed back in return. Legitimate shipping flourished, as did smuggling, privateering, and piracy. (The people in these records do not fit the image of the sleepy Dutchman. New Netherland was a frontier, and its population included a full range of adventurers, fortune-seekers, and rascals.)

The possible uses of the records are limited only by the imagination of historians and genealogists. It is to be hoped, as these and other translations by A. J. F. van Laer are used, and as the worth of the New York Historical Manuscripts is recognized, that someone will be inspired to carry on the translation of the Dutch records, and that all the records, Dutch and English, will be published. For the moment it is good to know that four volumes of the New Netherland government archives are being published and that the work of A. J. F. van Laer was not in vain.

Albany, New York

May 30, 1973
This volume of council minutes spans a most important period for the United Provinces of the Netherlands and the Dutch West India Company. In brief, the years 1652–1654 witnessed a series of events which tested the strength of the former and strained the resources of the latter, sending shock waves against the shores of New Netherland.

During the eighty-year struggle for independence from Spain, the United Provinces had developed into one of the greatest commercial empires of the seventeenth century. East and West India Company ships returned to the fatherland with the riches of the world: spices and porcelain from the East, and peltries and sugar from the Americas. Dutch ships had become the most common freighters of goods in the Mediterranean/Baltic trade, carrying goods even for the Spanish during the war. It has been said that the Dutch would trade with the devil in hell if they could avoid burning the sails of their ships.\(^1\) However, this worldwide trading empire, which created the Golden Age of the Netherlands, also brought with it certain dependencies which proved nearly fatal during the first war with England. In peacetime the Dutch staple diet of bread and herring was maintained by the flow of grain from the Baltic states and the fishing fleets in the North Atlantic. During the first Anglo-Dutch war (1652–1654), the English blockade of the Dutch mainland was so effective that Johan de Witt, the Grand Pensionary of the United Provinces, lamented that “our dear fatherland stands … in a great, troubled and almost desperate state, as if it were besieged and taken.”\(^2\)

Coincidental to the war with England, the Dutch West India Company was having trouble with one of its principal possessions. This stock company, which was modeled after the highly successful East India Company, was chartered by the States-General in 1621 with the primary objective of carrying on the war with Spain and its vassal state Portugal in the Atlantic theater of operations. Profits were to be realized mainly from the seizure of enemy shipping, especially the treasure fleets returning to Spain from Central America. In 1628 Piet Heyn’s capture of the Spanish silver fleet off the coast

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of Cuba renewed interest among the directors of the Company in securing a foothold in Brazil. By 1636 the WIC had established control over most of the former Portuguese colony north of the river São Francisco. However, Dutch successes in this region were short-lived. A revolt against the Dutch in 1645 was intensified in 1651 when the Ten Years’ Truce with Portugal expired. Thus during the years 1652–1654 the Company was involved in a full-scale war with the Portuguese over the possession of Brazil, culminating in the fall of the Dutch stronghold at Recife and the eventual loss of the entire colony in 1654.

The effect of the Anglo-Dutch war and the war in Brazil on New Netherland was considerable. Not only did the blockade of Dutch shipping by the English hinder the flow of goods and personnel to the colonies, but the WIC’s preoccupation with Brazil forced it to neglect its North American territory. It was a critical period for New Netherland and the seriousness of the situation is reflected in these council minutes for 1652 through 1654. Fear of an invasion from New England led to preparations for the defense of New Amsterdam and the near panic of the population. The situation was exacerbated by the presence of numerous English settlers on Long Island whose loyalties lay more with the enemy than with their adopted country. If the New England colonies had been able to overcome their particular interests and unify against the Dutch, the WIC colony probably would have fallen to the English during this period of the first Anglo-Dutch war. However, Petrus Stuyvesant, who had assumed the directorship of the colony in 1647, was able to strengthen the fortifications, calm the inhabitants, and effectively deter English raiding parties on Long Island. The urgency of the moment and the euphoria over the news of peace with England are all evident in Stuyvesant’s proclamation of prayer and thanksgiving issued on 29 July 1654.3

Preoccupations with shoring up the defenses against a possible enemy attack would have been enough for any commander during this crucial period; however, Stuyvesant also had to contend with internal problems stemming from a jurisdictional dispute with the patroonship of Rensselaerswyck and the chartering of the city of New Amsterdam. In addition to these distractions, he also had to contend with Swedish encroachments on Dutch territory in the Delaware region of New Netherland. Swedish attempts to establish a trading colony in this area eventually led to the capture of the Dutch trading post Fort Casimir on Trinity Sunday of 1654. Throughout these troubled times Stuyvesant exhibited the judicious sense of priorities and forceful leadership which were responsible more than anything else for

3 See page 159 in this volume of council minutes for the text of this proclamation.
the preservation of the Dutch colony.

Although a considerable amount of the council minutes concern executive decisions related to the defense and well-being of the colony in general, there are also numerous “private” cases which were presented to the director-general and high council for resolution, ranging from smuggling to sodomy. These cases reveal some of the texture of the colony’s social life and add another dimension to the history of New Netherland. The high council held ordinary court sessions once a week, passing judgment on all cases, civil and criminal; however, after the city of New Amsterdam received its municipal charter in February of 1653, those cases previously adjudicated by the high council were heard by the magistrates of the city. The high council served as the city’s court of appeal and continued to do so for other jurisdictions of New Netherland, such as Fort Orange and Rensselaerswyck. Relieved of the burden of holding court sessions for the rapidly growing population in the Manhattan/Long Island area, the high council could concentrate on such executive matters as making appointments, issuing proclamations, passing ordinances, replying to petitions, and corresponding with the governments of neighboring colonies.

The provincial secretary was responsible for recording all the proceedings of the high council and maintaining the archives for future reference. The books of records were identified by a single and double lettering system, this volume of council minutes being actually a combination of record books marked “C” and “AA”. In the 1860s, when E. B. O’Callaghan was given the task of organizing and describing the Dutch records kept in the New York Secretary of State’s office, he rearranged the original books according to his own conception of type and chronological order. Thus book “C”, which was described in an 1820 catalogue of records as “the provincial proceedings of the Governor and Council, Resolutions, Ordinances, Decrees, Sentences, and decisions of controversies, from 19th November, 1652 to 31st December, 1654;” and book “AA” as “being memorials of council and magistrates from 1652 to 1653,” were combined to form O’Callaghan’s Volume V, containing “Council Minutes, 1652–1654.” The earliest surviving council minutes are for the years 1638 through 1649 and comprise books “A” and “B”, which were combined by O’Callaghan as Volume IV. These minutes were translated by A. J. F. van Laer in the early 1900s and eventually published in the series New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch in 1974. However, it is to be noted that the council minute books have not been transmitted without loss. Minutes previous to Willem Kieft’s directorship, or before 1638, were probably taken

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4 See New York State Legislature, Senate Journal (1820) for this catalogue of records.
back to the Netherlands with the former directors Peter Minuit and Wouter van Twiller. There also exist considerable gaps in the later records, one of which is between August of 1649 and January of 1652. Thus over two years of council minutes are missing between O’Callaghan’s Volumes IV and V. No mention is made of these records in the 1820 inventory, indicating that they have been lost for at least 163 years. Also lost is the “Book of Petitions” which is referred to several times in the council minutes. It apparently contained copies of petitions submitted to the council for resolution. The order or recommendation on each petition is recorded in the council minutes; however, the request itself is only briefly stated, if at all, because the full text of each petition would have been kept in this special book for reference purposes.

O’Callaghan’s arrangement of the Dutch records has been followed in the present translation for several reasons. First, it would have been impossible to re-establish the integrity of the original two record books after they had been combined for over 100 years. In the process of rearranging the records, O’Callaghan cut each book apart, interleaved the pages chronologically, and then had them rebound in leather covers, providing each volume with an introduction and an index. After the 1911 Library fire, the leather covers, together with the front and back matter added by O’Callaghan, were discarded, leaving only what remained of the manuscripts themselves. Second, after O’Callaghan reorganized the Dutch records, he compiled a calendar citing their contents according to volume and manuscript page number.5 Because his calendar is still considered the primary access to the Dutch records by most scholars, it was decided not to destroy its usefulness as a guide.

The above-mentioned 1911 Library fire caused much damage to the “Colonial Manuscripts” in general. If the Dutch records had not been located on the lower storage shelves, and had the English records stored above not collapsed on these records, forming a protective covering, probably nothing would have survived. Of the twenty-three volumes of records only the first volume was completely destroyed, because it was on the desk of the keeper of the manuscripts, A. J. F. van Laer, the morning of the fire. Volumes V through X suffered the most damage because of their shelf location above the other Dutch records. In comparison to Volume X, which had several inches burned away at the top of each manuscript, Volume V suffered only minimal loss to the tops of the first forty pages, together with some charring along the exposed margin. The damaged areas are reflected in the present translation by the use of empty brackets, with the space between the brackets approximating the amount of material lost. Those portions of the text enclosed in

5 Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, edited by E. B. O’Callaghan, Albany, 1865.
brackets represent the recovery of material through translations made before the fire. The majority of these translations appear in Volumes XII–XIV of NYCD, edited by Berthold Fernow. Consult APPENDIX A, herein, for a key to Fernow’s translations of material in Volume V. The remaining translations, which were used to recover lost material, appear in E. B. O’Callaghan’s Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland. Fernow’s translations, which comprise about one-quarter of the material in Volume V, were used only for the recovery of lost portions of the manuscripts and should be quoted with caution, especially in the transcription of proper names. The present translator has attempted to remain true to the writing style in the council minutes. Each entry has been laid out as close as possible to the form of the original, except where noted. Proper names have been transcribed exactly as they appear in the council minutes, with the index recording the variations after the most common form of the name. For the English equivalent of seventeenth-century Dutch measurements, weights, and money consult APPENDIX B. Throughout the translation the term “mile” is to be considered as a Dutch mile. The numbers enclosed in brackets represent the manuscript page numbers.
The winter of 1654–1655 in New Amsterdam was so severe that farmers were ordered to haul firewood, people were punished for cutting palisades to heat their houses, and it is related that George Baxter, traveling from New England to his home on Long Island, was able to cross the East River on the ice at the “White Stone.” It may also have been the severity of the winter that inspired Petrus Stuyvesant, the director general of New Netherland, to lead a trade mission to the Caribbean in December of 1654. He would not return until July of the following year.

In Stuyvesant’s absence the council consisted of Nicasius de Sille, Johannes de la Montagne, and Cornelis van Tienhoven. As the highest governing body in New Netherland, the council was responsible for all legislative, judicial, and executive activities within its jurisdiction. In the early years under directors Minuit, Van Twiller, and Kieft this meant the entire territory from the Connecticut River to Delaware Bay. However, as New Netherland’s population grew it was necessary to establish new communities with rights and privileges of their own, and to grant older settlements the right to govern themselves within their own local jurisdictions.

The first inferior court was granted at Heemstede in 1644; followed by the establishment of local jurisdictions at Gravesande in 1645, Breuckelen in 1646, and Vlissingen (Flushing) in 1648. The governing body in these communities was a board of magistrates, and a schout who served as the law enforcement officer. In 1652 the resolution of a jurisdictional dispute with the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck on the upper Hudson led to the formation of the village of Beverwijck. Its jurisdiction comprised of a 3,000 foot perimeter around Fort Orange and included the settlements south of Rensselaerswijck at the Esopus (Kingston area) and Catskill; in 1661 this area in the

1 Whitestone, Long Island, location of the present-day Whitestone Bridge.
2 Representatives of the patroonship in the Netherlands strongly contested the violation of its territorial integrity. In 1674 the dispute was finally resolved in favor of the patroonship.
mid-Hudson region was granted its own court at a settlement in the Esopus called *Wiltwijck*. In the same year that *Beverwijck* was granted rights for local government, *Middelborch* on Long Island was also established as a jurisdiction. Request for local governance within New Amsterdam was met with opposition from Stuyvesant and the council in Fort Amsterdam. However, by 1653 the work load of managing local affairs had become so great that New Amsterdam was finally granted a municipal charter. In 1654 *Amersfoort* and *Midwout* on Long Island were both granted inferior courts. Thus the shape of Stuyvesant’s internal jurisdiction was quite different from that of his predecessors.

By 1655, when these council minutes begin, New Netherland was governed locally by seven jurisdictions on Long Island, two on the upper Hudson (including the patroonship of *Rensselaerswijck*), and one on Manhattan. Although the Dutch had begun to settle in the Connecticut River valley at Fort *Goede Hoop* (Hartford) and at *Roodenbergh* (New Haven), the treaty of Hartford in 1650 removed this region entirely from Dutch control. In addition to losing the entire Fresh River region of New Netherland, Stuyvesant also ceded Long Island from the eastern end to a line running along the western side of Oyster Bay. Although the terms of the treaty were never ratified by either home country, they were cited in such actions as the expulsion of English settlers from *Vreedlant* (Westchester) in 1656.

Another boundary problem was related to the South River (Delaware) region of New Netherland. Because of its sparse population it was still administered directly by the council on Manhattan. However, Dutch claims to the region were being severely tested by Swedish attempts to establish a trading colony in the Delaware Valley. In fact, in 1654 the Swedes captured the major Dutch stronghold of Fort Casimir (New Castle, Delaware), leaving New Netherland without any significant presence in the South River region. The growing agricultural communities on the west side of the Hudson River in the former patroonship of Pavonia and on the disputed patroonship of Staten Island were still within the direct jurisdiction of the council on Manhattan.

The year 1654 was bittersweet for the West India Company and its posses-
sion of New Netherland. It saw the end of the first war with England (1652–1654); a war that tested the naval resources of patria and the abilities of Petrus Stuyvesant. English strategy to place its naval forces in the Channel—the so-called bottleneck of Europe—succeeded in blockading the Netherlands and disrupting normal commercial traffic to North America for most of the war. For the duration of the war Stuyvesant was faced with the prospect of invasion from the English in New England or the Chesapeake colonies. It took all his political and military skills to hold New Netherland together. News of peace with England was celebrated with bonfires and a day of prayer and thanksgiving. However, the euphoria was soon tempered by reports that Dutch forces in Brazil had surrendered the “impregnable” stronghold at Recife in Dutch Brazil to the Portuguese. Although the loss of Brazil in January of 1654 was a severe blow to the West India Company, it proved to be a boon to New Netherland. Resources, both financial and human that once flowed to South America, were now redirected to New Netherland.

The Swedish Expedition

Always the stepchild in relation to other interests of the WIC such as Africa and Brazil, the North American colony was now ready to become an important part in the Europe-New World trade networks. It was Stuyvesant’s intention to sail to Barbados in order to investigate the effects of the English navigation act and to discuss trade relations both there and with his vice director at Curacao. Stuyvesant probably planned to return in early spring; plenty of time to make plans for an expedition against the Swedes on the Delaware. In reaction to the Swedish capture of Fort Casimir on the Delaware, the directors in Amsterdam instructed Stuyvesant to eliminate the Swedish colony once and for all. However, unforeseen events in the Caribbean delayed his return for several months, not only placing his small party of three ships in jeopardy but also endangering his ability to mount an attack on the Swedes in 1655.

Stuyvesant departed for the Caribbean with three ships on December 24, 1654. His major objective was to establish trade relations with the English-held island. It was also important that he investigate the seizure of eight Dutch ships at Barbados. Stuyvesant probably wanted to find out whether they were seized because of ignorance of the peace settlement in April or because of strict implementation of the Navigation Act; in which case, there would be little chance to hope for trade with Barbados or the other English-
held islands in the Caribbean. He reached Barbados sometime in the middle of January. However, Stuyvesant’s small naval party was put into a delicate predicament when an English naval squadron commanded by William Penn arrived on January 29. Not only did Penn terminate Stuyvesant’s trading activities because they contravened the Navigation Act but he also detained the Dutch ships until the departure of the English warships on March 31. The directors in Amsterdam were furious when they discovered that the director general of New Netherland was a virtual prisoner on Barbados. In addition to being upset with Stuyvesant because he had undertaken the Caribbean mission without their permission, they were also anxious that he had placed their plans for an invasion of New Sweden in jeopardy.

Although Stuyvesant was in an extremely awkward position, he did manage to make the most of the situation. While on Barbados he met Matthias Beck, the former manager of the silver mines in Siara in Dutch Brazil. When Brazil fell to the Portuguese in 1654 Beck had apparently fled to Barbados. Since Beck had served in the West India Company for nineteen years, he was probably well known to Stuyvesant. When the Dutch party was finally allowed to leave Barbados, Beck accompanied it to Curaçao. Stuyvesant installed Beck as the new vice director and drew up his instructions for the administration of the Dutch windward islands.5

When Stuyvesant returned to New Netherland on July 11, 1655, he immediately set to work organizing the expedition against New Sweden. By September he had managed to assemble an invasion force of 350 soldiers and seven ships, including de Waagh, a forty-two gun warship belonging to the city of Amsterdam. The “Swedish expedition,” as it was called, set sail for the Delaware after church service on 5 September. A bold maneuver allowed Stuyvesant to split the Swedish forces. With drums beating on deck, the Dutch ships sailed directly beneath the Swedish guns on Fort Trefaldighet (Fort Trinity, formerly Fort Casimir).6 The Swedish commander, Sven Skute, froze; unable to give the order to fire, the Dutch force was allowed to pass uncontested and land north of the fort, cutting the coastal road to Fort Christina (Wilmington). Within a week Stuyvesant had control of all Swedish possessions on the Delaware.7

6 See C. A. Weslager’s “A Ruse de Guerre—and the Fall of New Sweden,” in Delaware History, volume XXIII, number 1, 1–23.
The Peach War

What should have been a joyous occasion for the Dutch turned into one of sorrow. On September 15, while Stuyvesant and his troops were still on the Delaware, a large force of Indians from various nations attacked Manhattan. Over 600 Indians in sixty-four canoes landed within the city walls of New Amsterdam on the 15th of September. Their intentions were unclear; at best, confusing. According to a report sent to Stuyvesant encamped on the Delaware, the Indians may have been bribed by the Swedes to strike at the heart of New Netherland while the Dutch were invading New Sweden. Although this report cannot be corroborated, it is likely that news of possible Swedish involvement was responsible for the unruly behavior of the Dutch soldiers in the Swedish settlements north of Fort Christina (Wilmington, Delaware). Some Indians claimed that they were looking for “Northern Indians” as they broke into houses. The designation “Northern Indians” generally referred to Mohicans located between Stamford, Connecticut and the Fresh River. However, according to two separate reports “Northern Indians” had actually participated in the attack on Manhattan. It may be that the target of the attack was Indians from the eastern end of Long Island. At least they seemed to be the only Indians in the neighborhood of Manhattan who were not involved in the attack. However, the Dutch were of the opinion that these claims were only a cover for their true motive—revenge for the actions of several officials of New Netherland.

The 1655 attack on Manhattan is generally called the Peach War, a name derived from an incident involving former fiscal Hendrick van Dijck. According to several reports, Van Dijck killed an Indian woman whom he had caught stealing peaches in his garden. Although the directors at Amsterdam later concluded that Van Dijck’s brutal act was the primary cause of the Indian uprising, it was probably the behavior of fiscal Cornelis van Tienhoven that moved the Indians to action. In a letter from Nicasius de Sille, a member of Stuyvesant’s council, to Hans Bontemantel, WIC official, it is stated that the people who sought refuge from the Indian attacks were calling for Van Tienhoven’s head, claiming that he was the sole cause of the calamity. Unfortunately, the charges against the fiscal are nowhere specified, except to

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8 The earliest written reference for the name “Peach War,” is found in *A History of New York* by Washington Irving, edited by James W. Tuttleton (New York, 1983).
state that he was intoxicated.9 Whatever the exact causes were it is clear that much damage was done. According to Stuyvesant forty people were killed (others report 100); 100 people, mostly women and children, taken prisoner; twenty-eight farms destroyed, including the loss of 500 head of cattle and 12,000 skipples of grain.10 Although Manhattan escaped major damage, Pavonia and Staten Island were devastated. The aftermath of the September uprising is documented in the present volume of council minutes, including the negotiations for release of the people held prisoner by the Indians.

In addition to the extensive documentation in these council minutes of the Swedish expedition and the aftermath of the Peach War, there are many entries that contribute to our understanding of the human dimension of the period. For example, there are numerous petitions for such varied concerns as the raffling off of religious books to filing for divorce. The case of Hans Breyer reveals how little the criminal mind has changed over the centuries when he exhorts potential accomplices with the larcenous appeal: “What do you want to work for? Get rid of the wheelbarrow! We’ll get money the easy way!” When Frans Allard is also sentenced to death for being the recipient of Breyer’s stolen goods, the court sums up the logic behind the judgment with the proverb: “If there were no customers, there would be no thieves.” Also of note is the case of Gelyn Verplanck, which demonstrates the contractual basis of the apprenticeship system and the admissibility of evidence.

Colonial Administration

Although a considerable portion of the council minutes concern executive decisions related to the defense and well-being of the New Netherland in general, there are also numerous private cases on appeal from the court decisions of New Amsterdam, which were presented to the director general and council for resolution, such as the Breyer and Verplanck cases. The council held ordinary court sessions once a week, passing judgment on all cases, civil and criminal. However, after the city of New Amsterdam received its municipal charter in February of 1653, those cases previously adjudicated by the council were heard by the magistrates of the city. The council served as a court of appeal for New Amsterdam as well as the other

9 Letter from Nicasius de Sille to Hans Bontemantel, October 27, 1655, in the “New Netherland Papers” at the New York Public Library.
10 Letter from Stuyvesant to Van der Capellen toe Ryssel, October 30, 1655, in NYCD, 1:639.
jurisdictions such as Beverwijck and Rensselaerswijck. Relieved of the burden of holding court sessions for the rapidly growing population in the Manhattan area, the council could concentrate on such executive matters as making appointments, issuing proclamations, passing ordinances, replying to petitions, and corresponding with the governments of neighboring colonies.

The provincial secretary was responsible for recording all the proceedings of the high council and maintaining the archives for future reference. The books of records were identified by a single and double lettering system. The records making up this volume of council minutes are actually a combination of books marked “C,” “D,” and “P.” In the 1860s, when E. B. O’Callaghan was given the task of organizing and describing the Dutch colonial manuscripts kept in the New York Secretary of State’s office, he rearranged the original books according to his own conception of type and chronological order. Under this system book “C,” which was described in an 1820 catalogue of records as “the provincial proceedings of the Governor and Council, Resolutions, Ordinances, Decrees, Sentences, and decisions of controversies, from the 6th of January 1655 to 29th April 1656,” and book “D” described as being a book “of a similar kind from May 1, 1656 to 31st December 1656” were combined to form O’Callaghan’s Volume VI, containing “Council Minutes, 1655–1656.”11 It should be noted that book “P” contains copies of the minutes found in book “C.” In many cases material was recovered from this source to fill in damaged portions of book “C.”

The Dutch Colonial Manuscripts

The earliest surviving council minutes are for the years 1638 through 1649 and comprise books “A” and “B,” which were combined by O’Callaghan as Volume IV. These minutes were translated by A. J. F. van Laer in the early 1900s and eventually published in the series New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch in 1974. However, one must always keep in mind that the council minute books have not been transmitted without loss. Minutes previous to Willem Kieft’s directorship, or before 1638, were probably taken back to the Netherlands with the former directors Peter Minuit and Wouter van Twiller. There also exist considerable gaps in the later records, one of which is between August of 1649 and January of 1652. Thus over two years of council minutes are missing between O’Callaghan’s Volumes IV and V. No mention is made of these records in the 1820 inventory, indicating that they

11 See New York State Legislature, Senate Journal (1820) for this catalogue of records.
have been lost for over 170 years. Also lost is the “Book of Petitions,” which is referred to several times in the council minutes. It apparently contained copies of petitions submitted to the council for resolution. The order or recommendation on each petition is recorded in the council minutes; however, the request itself is only briefly stated, if at all, because the full text of each petition would have been kept in this special book for reference purposes.

O’Callaghan’s arrangement of the Dutch records has been followed in the present translation for several reasons. First, it would have been impossible to re-establish the integrity of the original two record books after they had been combined for over 100 years. In the process of rearranging the records, O’Callaghan cut each book apart, interleaved the pages chronologically, and then had them rebound in leather covers, providing each volume with an introduction and an index. After the 1911 New York State Library fire, the leather covers, together with the front and back matter added by O’Callaghan, were discarded, leaving only what remained of the manuscripts themselves. Second, after O’Callaghan reorganized the Dutch records, he compiled a calendar citing their contents according to volume and manuscript page number. Because his calendar is still considered the primary access to the Dutch records by most scholars, it was decided not to destroy its usefulness as a guide.

The above-mentioned 1911 Library fire caused much damage to the “Colonial Manuscripts” in general. Of the twenty-three volumes of records only the first volume was completely destroyed because it was on the desk of the keeper of the manuscripts, A. J. F. van Laer, the morning of the fire. Volumes V through X suffered the most damage because of their shelf location above the other Dutch records. In comparison to Volume X, which had several inches burned away at the top of each manuscript, Volume VI suffered only loss of several lines of text at the top of every page. Fortunately, the copies in book “P” do not match the position on the page in book “C”; therefore, what has been lost at the top of one page often appears complete in the copy. The damaged areas are reflected in the present translation by the use of empty brackets, with the space between the brackets approximating the amount of material lost. Those portions of the text enclosed in brackets represent the recovery of material through translations made before the fire. The majority of these translations appear in Volumes XII–XIV of NYCD, edited by Berthold Fernow. Consult Appendix A for a key to Fernow’s translations of material in Volume VI.

The present translator has attempted to remain true to the writing style

12 Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, edited by E.B. O’Callaghan (Albany, 1865).
in the council minutes. Each entry has been laid out as close as possible to the form of the original, except where noted. Proper names have been transcribed exactly, as they appear in the text, with the index recording the variations after the most common form of the name. For the English equivalent of seventeenth-century Dutch measurements, weights, and money, consult Appendix B. The numbers enclosed in brackets represent the manuscript page numbers.
Volume XI of the Dutch Colonial Manuscripts contains the correspondence of Petrus Stuyvesant from 1647–1653. It represents the first six years of his seventeen-year tenure as director general of New Netherland, spanning the final years of the war with Spain through the first war with England. Stuyvesant arrived in the West India Company province which had experienced years of desolation under the previous director, Willem Kieft. The destructive Indian wars pursued by Kieft had created an atmosphere of despair and discontent among the population which led to his recall. Stuyvesant was sent as Kieft’s replacement to restore order and discipline in New Netherland.

Petrus Stuyvesant was born in Weststellingwerf, Friesland in 1610 the son of a Reformed domine. He entered the service of the WIC at the age of twenty-five after attending the University of Franeker. His first assignments were as commissary of stores on the rat-infested island Fernando de Noronha in the South Atlantic and at Pernambuco in Dutch Brazil. A transfer to the island of Curaçao off the coast of Venezuela in 1639 led to his appointment as governor of the Dutch possessions in the Caribbean less than three years later. Stuyvesant’s rapid rise in the Company’s service reflected high regard for his administrative and military abilities. He executed his new responsibilities with considerable energy and ingenuity. As a military commander obligated to a policy of aggressive engagement with Spanish interests in the Caribbean, he attacked the Spanish settlement of Puerto Cabello on the coast of Venezuela in retaliation for the seizure of a Dutch fort on the island of Bonaire. Despite near starvation conditions on Curaçao he was able to assemble a military force strong enough to attack Sint Maarten. During the siege of the Spanish fort Stuyvesant’s right leg was struck by a cannon ball. The injury was severe enough to require amputation. When Stuyvesant’s wound failed to heal properly his surgeons recommended that he leave the tropics for the cooler climate of his homeland.

While recovering in the Netherlands Stuyvesant was fitted with a wooden leg and successfully wooed Judith Bayard, the daughter of the Walloon domine in Breda. Shortly after his marriage he was appointed to the position of director general of New Netherland, Curaçao, Bonaire, and Aruba. He was
only thirty-six years old when the directors showed their confidence in his abilities.

Stuyvesant became director general of these possessions of the West India Company at a critical time in the history of the United Provinces. Major changes were taking place in European affairs. The thirty years war in Germany and the eighty years Dutch revolt against Spain were both to be resolved within a year. England had overthrown the monarchy and was about to embark on an experiment with republicanism which would have grave implications for the Dutch nation.

Stuyvesant also became director general at a time of change and reorganization within the West India Company. Previously, New Netherland's successes and failures were shared by all chambers in the Company; under Stuyvesant the chamber of Amsterdam would have sole responsibility. The new director was reminded of this fact early in his administration when he agreed to pay off outstanding debts of his predecessor Willem Kieft. He was reprimanded sternly by the directors for having accepted payment of debts incurred while New Netherland's financial losses were being absorbed by the Company's general fund. Such an error in judgment could be expected of a young director; however, such administrative miscues paled in the face of several major problems inherited from his predecessor: one internal, two external, all linked to a certain extent, and all resolved by Stuyvesant within the first five years of his administration. We will look at these problems in turn, followed by the manner in which Stuyvesant confronted these challenges to his administration and how he managed to resolve them. All three take up a major portion of this volume of correspondence. Let us first consider the problems.

A TENSE BEGINNING

Connecticut
Since the explorations of Henry Hudson in 1609, New Netherland was defined by three major water courses: the Connecticut in the east, called the Versche Rivier; the Hudson in the north, called the Noort Rivier; and the Delaware in the south, called the Suyt Rivier. Such water arteries were critical for commercial purposes, allowing Dutch merchants access to areas rich in natural resources. In North America, the resource was fur. Although navigable water was necessary for commercial interests organized around fleets
of merchant ships, it often made poor and unpredictable boundaries.

Soon after Hudson gave the Netherlands a basis to claim rights to the fertile territory between New England and Virginia, the area was visited by a succession of Dutch commercial ventures. Most important for the future of commercial developments of New Netherland was the series of voyages commanded by Adriaen Courtsen Block. Representing a group of Lutheran merchants in Amsterdam, Block headed for the same drainage system now carrying Hudson’s name. Instead of approaching the mouth of the river from the south as Hudson had done several years before, Block attempted to find the river by sailing along the coast of New England. His voyage took him along the coast of Cape Cod, Rhode Island, and all along the coast of Connecticut. Block explored and recorded every major waterway emptying into Long Island Sound until he sailed through the Hell Gate and found Hudson’s river. Block’s explorations further defined the shape of New Netherland; now the Netherlands had a claim to a territory extending from Cape Cod to Delaware Bay. More important, Block had established contact with the various native tribes along the coast of Connecticut: especially the Narrigansetts, Pequots, and Mohigans. Block used the island off the north fork of Long Island (which still carries his name) as a base of operations to continue his trade with this lucrative area in three additional voyages. It was probably during Block’s trading activities between the Hudson River and the coast of Connecticut that a unique trading relationship developed which would give the Dutch a distinct advantage in the fur trade for over twenty years and vaguely define the northeastern boundaries of New Netherland.¹

In brief, the trading relationship was this: the Pequots east of the Connecticut River had gained a monopoly in the production of zewant. These purple and white shells originally used as ornaments and recording devices by the Indians quickly developed into a portable currency in the fur trade. The Mohawks attached great value to this currency as they lived far from the production source and could use it to great effect in commercial dealings with their neighboring tribes to the west. Zewant became so essential in trading operations that it became known as the source and mother of the whole beaver trade,² The Dutch had developed the ideal trading relationship

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¹ See Johannes De Laet, Nieuwe Wereldt, ofte Beschrijvinghe van West-Indien. (Leyden, 1630), 101–104.
² Direct quote comes from E. B. O’Callaghan’s History of New Netherland, 2:543, who cites Albany Records xviii, 85 as the source. The citation refers to Adriaen van der Kemp’s translation of the Dutch colonial manuscripts held in the New York Secretary of State’s office in the 19th century. The translation was never published but made accessible in manuscript form at the New York State Library. Historians generally referred to
in New Netherland—an exchange of Pequot zewant for Mohawk furs. Thus Dutch traders could trade hard goods with the Pequots for zewant which they would take to the upper reaches of the Hudson to trade with the Mohawks for furs. The relationship seemed to be profitable for all concerned. The Pequots received manufactured hard goods, the Mohawks received the coveted zewant, and the Dutch filled their ships with furs. Unfortunately this successful relationship attracted New Netherland’s neighbors in New England. In 1637 an English force attacked the Pequots with little more provocation than greed. By the time Stuyvesant arrived at Manhattan in 1647 New Englanders had occupied much of the land originally claimed by the Dutch. The Dutch trading post of Fort Good Hope (Hartford, Connecticut) was literally surrounded by English settlers. Trade from the north had been cut off by the establishment of an English trading post at Springfield, Massachusetts. The boundary between New England and New Netherland needed to be established before the land-hungry farmers from Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay pushed further west into Dutch territory. This was Stuyvesant’s first major external problem which required his attention soon after his arrival.

New Sweden

The second external problem concerned the southern region of New Netherland which grew out of a dispute between two factions of the West India Company over exploitation or colonization. From the very beginning there arose a debate over whether the overseas territories should only be considered sites for trading posts concerned with exploiting the natural resources from the region or open to colonists who would commit themselves to developing the region agriculturally. One faction suspected that the colonists would be a drain on the Company’s profits through illegal competition and smuggling, while the other faction explained that an agricultural base was necessary to maintain the trading routes and discourage settlement by other foreign powers. When Piet Heyn captured the Spanish silver fleet off Cuba in 1628, there was renewed interest in Brazil to the detriment of New Netherland. Most of the Company’s financial and human resources soon began to go south, while the colony in North America was forced to turn to alterna-
tive means for development. In 1629 the faction favoring colonization won a concession called the “Freedoms and Exemptions.” Rather than expend WIC capital the directors decided to privatize colonization.4

One of the most active proponents of colonization was Samuel Blommaert, a director of the WIC. Blommaert was so enthusiastic about the concept of privatizing colonization that he was one of the first to apply for a patroonship; his was to be along the Versche Rivier in Connecticut and called Blommaert’s Dael. However, the opposing faction in the WIC discouraged colonization because they feared that the expense would eat into profits and the colonists would soon compete with the Company in the exploitation of the natural resources; again reducing profits. More than once they pointed out that the continual smuggling of furs would only increase as the population grew. Early enthusiasm for the patroonship plan of colonization found numerous investors willing to risk their capital on land from Delaware Bay to the Connecticut River. However, early enthusiasm soon turned to disappointment for most of the investors. Swanendael on Delaware Bay was destroyed by Indians; Pavonia in New Jersey was sold back to the Company; others, such as Samuel Blommaert’s patroonship on the Connecticut River, were never capitalized. Only Rensselaerswijck located along the upper Hudson managed to survive. Blommaert became so frustrated with the WIC’s opposition to promote a policy which he thought absolutely necessary for its growth and development that he sought foreign interests to carry out his plans.

By the seventeenth century Sweden had enjoyed a long association with the Netherlands. The natural resources of the Baltic region had attracted Dutch merchant ships for centuries. A steady intellectual, political, and financial exchange led to a familiarity rarely experienced by two sovereign nations. Blommaert was no exception. When he was thwarted in his plans for colonization by the WIC he turned to Sweden. Under cover of anonymity (he was still a director of the WIC) he offered to finance the founding of a Swedish colony in the New World. His plan was enhanced by his acquaintance with Peter Minuit, former director of New Netherland, who had been deposed by the anti-patroon faction of the WIC because of his zealous promotion of privatization of colonization. Minuit knew New Netherland from north to south. He knew its strengths and weaknesses; he knew where Sweden could establish a colony with maximum effect and minimal opposition. In 1638 Minuit sailed for the Delaware River valley with two ships built

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4 See A. J. F van Laer, Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts (Albany, 1908) for the text of the “Freedoms and Exemptions.”
in the Netherlands, equipped and manned mostly by a Dutch crew and commanded by Dutch skippers. It was basically an operation funded by Dutch funds and resources but organized under the flag of Sweden.5

Minuit’s intention to locate the colony on the Minquaes Kill (Wilmington, Delaware) proved to be a good choice. When word reached New Amsterdam of the Swedish incursion into the Delaware valley, Director Willem Kieft could only offer token opposition; he had only just arrived in New Netherland as director a few months before and he was uncertain about disturbing relations between the Netherlands and Sweden without advice from the WIC directors. Although the Dutch authorities would later dispute the claim, Minuit was able to purchase from the rightful owners land on the west side of the Delaware River, making the WIC trading post, Fort Nassau, useless.

The WIC had originally considered the Delaware River to be the potential center of New Netherland. Misinformation had equated the Delaware Valley’s climate with that of Florida. In 1633 the river froze solid enough to enable Indians to cross on the ice (about one kilometer) and take up residence in the empty fort. When the Company first began to send over settlers in 1624, several families were sent to High Island (Burlington Island) on the Delaware where Fort Wilhelmus was established. Soon after these settlers were withdrawn in 1626 for resettlement on the newly purchased Manhattan Island, Fort Nassau (Gloucester, New Jersey) was constructed to maintain the Company’s presence on the Delaware. However, lack of financial and human resources made it possible only to garrison the fort during the trading season—between May and September. Thus it was used as shelter for the Indians in the winter. In 1635 it was occupied by English soldiers from Virginia, who were quickly expelled by a military force sent to the area by Director Wouter van Twiller. Nevertheless, such activity shows that the region was a low priority until the Swedes appeared in 1638.6

Willem Kieft may have had little understanding for dealing with the native Americans within New Netherland—most of his actions had disastrous results—but he did understand how to live with his European neighbors. Although New Sweden had become an awkward reality within the limits of New Netherland, Kieft was able to live with the Swedes on the Delaware with little display of hostility; in fact, at one point he and the Swedish Gov-

Governor Johan Prints joined forces to expel English settlers from New Haven who had begun to construct houses in the Schuylkill area (Philadelphia). Although Kieft had learned to accommodate the Swedes on the Delaware, their presence had effectively denied most Indian trade to the Company’s Fort Nassau. When Stuyvesant arrived in 1647 Governor Prints was planning to tighten his control on the Delaware trade. The Company could and would not let its rights be trampled upon. Stuyvesant would take the first step in solving this second external problem a year after his success with the New England boundary question.7

Rensselaerswyck
Although Blommaert was unable to work within the system, Kiliaen van Rensselaer did enjoy some success as patroon. He was a director of the WIC and leader of the faction favoring privatization of colonization. His attempt to establish a patroonship in the New World succeeded where others had failed because of his imagination and patience. Although a diamond merchant by profession he was fascinated by agriculture. He had purchased large tracts of land in het Gooi (a small region on the southern edge of the Zuyder Zee), which he set about draining in preparation for cultivation. His success in New Netherland was also attributable to good preparation. Before making application for a patroonship, he consulted with a man who was knowledgeable about agricultural potential in the Hudson Valley. He was advised to purchase land on the upper Hudson, which had the WIC Fort Orange located in its geographical center on the western bank of the river. It may have been an oversight by the directors to allow its most lucrative trading post to be surrounded by a patroonship, or it may have been seen as an asset by the directors to have Rensselaerswyck at its disposal to provide agricultural goods and services to this isolated post. Competition in the fur trade did not appear to be a consideration because the “Freedoms and Exemptions,” which established the patroonship plan of colonization, disallowed any private trading in furs in an area serviced by a WIC post. Therefore, the situation seemed to be ideal for both the Company and the patroonship: the Company’s fort was serviced by an agricultural community, while the agricultural community was protected by the fort.

In the early years Rensselaerswyck and Fort Orange coexisted with few problems. Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the first patroon (who never set foot in

the New World) sent over farmers, craftsmen, livestock, agricultural equipment, and a steady stream of detailed instructions to his managers. It was not his intention to compete with the Company but rather to coexist for their mutual benefit. As a director of the WIC and proponent of privatization he was obligated to honor the articles of the “ Freedoms and Exemptions” and the Company’s rights in the area. Unfortunately, Kiliaen van Rensselaer died before his ambitious plans to form a community on the east side of the river, separated by the river from the fur trade at Fort Orange, could be realized. In any event his plans were being challenged by two factors which attracted the inhabitants of Rensselaerswijk to settle in an area just north of the fort. In 1640, three years before his death, the WIC revised the “ Freedoms and Exemptions” to open the fur trade to everyone in return for a recognition fee. Then a series of wars between the WIC and the River Indians to the south brought about a sense of insecurity which further attracted the inhabitants to the proximity of the fort.

When Stuyvesant arrived in 1647 only a few houses had been constructed in the so-called *bijeenwooningh* north of the fort.8 Soon after Slichtenhorst was settled in his position he saw the advantage of forming a settlement near Fort Orange, rather than on the east side of the river, and immediately began to grant building lots to his settlers in the area north of the fort. When Stuyvesant heard of the construction of houses near Fort Orange he reacted swiftly. He ordered that the patroonship refrain from all construction within a cannon shot of the fort (about 3000 feet). As a military man Stuyvesant was protecting the security of the fort and was determined to reestablish the Company’s authority in the area. Under Stuyvesant’s predecessor, Willem Kieft, only a token force was maintained at Fort Orange. Kieft was apparently willing to allow the officials at Rensselaerswijk to administer the area with little interference from the Company. Stuyvesant saw the potential of the area not only as his most important trading post but also as a rich agricultural district. He also knew that this important region could be threatened from the south by a hostile presence in the Suyt Rivier (South or Delaware River). This internal instability was resolved by Stuyvesant shortly after his successes in the Delaware Valley.9

Whether Stuyvesant viewed these three major problems as interrelated we do not know. However, it is evident that the resolution with the New England colonies led to his initiative against the Swedes on the Delaware which

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8 The Dutch word literally means “living together,” i.e., a community.

was prompted in part by a need to prevent foreign access to Rensselaerswijck and Fort Orange up this river valley.

**Bold Solutions**

*The Hartford Treaty*

Foremost on Stuyvesant’s agenda in 1647 was settlement of the boundary dispute with New England. It is worth noting that Willem Kieft was also confronted with the same boundary problem when he arrived as director in 1638. It was just the year before that the English had destroyed the Pequot nation as a trading power. The monopoly held by the Pequots and the Dutch over the zewant trade was shattered. The English were in control and poised to take over the Connecticut River Valley. In response to this disturbing turn of events, Kieft sent David Pietersz de Vries on a diplomatic mission to Fort Good Hope. In order to stabilize relations with the rapidly growing English colonies to the north, it was necessary that some sort of a boundary agreement be worked out that would satisfy all parties. However, De Vries’s mission to Governor Haynes of Hartford was unsuccessful. The English claimed ultimately that possession was nine points of the law. On his return to Manhattan De Vries was surprised to see that the entire Dutch region between the Fresh River and Greenwich had been taken over by the English.

When Stuyvesant confronted the boundary problem ten years later, not only had English settlements expanded even more widely but also the international situation had become extremely unstable. Charles I of England had been imprisoned early in 1648, leading to the so-called Second Civil War in England, which pitted royalists against roundheads and Presbyterians against Independents. The Dutch government was finding it difficult to figure out who was in charge across the Channel. There had been an opportunity to establish a boundary line between New Netherland and New England before King Charles was deposed, now the chances for ratification of any line seemed to grow dimmer.10

Stuyvesant was an active leader who could never be accused of sitting back and waiting for things to happen; he acted rather than reacted. All he needed was a pretext. With regard to the boundary question with New England his pretext came in the form of a ship from Medemblik called the St. 

10 See document 11:12 for letter from the WIC directors to Petrus Stuyvesant.
Beninjo. According to information gathered by Stuyvesant and his council, the ship only had a commission from the chamber of the Noorderquartier to get a load of salt within the limits of the charter in the West Indies; the ship’s master did not have permission to break bulk elsewhere. Instead of sailing directly to the Caribbean, Cornelis Claesen Snoy, the ship’s captain, and Willem Westerhuysen, the ship’s merchant and owner, made for New Haven (called Roobergh or Roodebergh, i.e., “Red Hill” by the Dutch) where the St. Beninjo was completely discharged of its cargo. Among the articles unloaded were such contraband items as gunpowder and firearms. When Stuyvesant heard of the arrival of the St. Beninjo at New Haven he sent a deputy by the name of Govert Aertsen to inspect its papers and assess recognition fees. After some negotiating the ship was given permission to sail on to New Amsterdam where Westerhuysen agreed to pay the required fees on his cargo. Shortly thereafter, however, Stuyvesant learned that Westerhuysen had no intention of sailing to New Amsterdam; instead he was preparing to sail directly to Virginia for a cargo of tobacco, denying the Company its rightful recognition fees.

For Stuyvesant the issues were clear. Westerhuysen’s ship had sailed into New Netherland territory (although claimed by the English of New Haven) without a proper commission. He had no intention to pay the Company the required fees; and in addition, he was carrying contraband. Rather than attempt to defuse the situation in order to avoid friction with New Haven, Stuyvesant took aggressive action. Some months before he had sold the ship Swol to the lieutenant governor of New Haven, Stephen Goodyear. All the details for transfer of the ship to New Haven had been worked out when the St. Beninjo incident flared up. In council Stuyvesant worked out a plan to deliver the Swol and seize the St. Beninjo at the same time. When the Swol was delivered to New Haven, its armed crew boarded the St. Beninjo and sailed back to New Amsterdam.11

The St. Beninjo incident sparked a long series of protests. Central to New Haven’s outrage was, of course, its contention that Stuyvesant had violated its jurisdiction and that the Dutch had no claim to the territory whatsoever. Stuyvesant countered these protests by claiming to be only upholding the rights of the WIC as he was sworn to do. He followed almost every response to these protests with a reminder of their plans to meet in the spring of 1648 in order to resolve their boundary problems.12

12 Correspondence, 11:4c, letter from Petrus Stuyvesant to Gov. Eaton of New Haven; see also 11:5c for Eaton’s response to Stuyvesant.
Stuyvesant appeared to have a friend in John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, or at least a sympathetic ear. The Massachusetts Bay colony always differed from Connecticut and New Haven in its reaction to New Netherland. It felt less threatened by the Dutch simply because it had less contact with New Netherland. In fact, it seems that Winthrop was actually taking the lead in setting up a meeting in order to settle these boundary disputes in an amicable manner.\(^{13}\)

For one reason or another the meeting between Stuyvesant and the governors of New England was postponed time and again. Usually the reason was given that one or the other was sick and unable to attend at a given time. It may also be that delay was being used to await direction from a more stable England. Unfortunately, the final excuse for postponement of a meeting planned for the spring of 1649 was the death of John Winthrop in April. Stuyvesant wrote to Governor Eaton of New Haven concerning Winthrop's passing, “I doe reallie Condole with you, we being all of us in these partes participants in the sad losse of one whose wisdom and integritie might have done much in composing matters betwene us. . .” You sense that Stuyvesant sincerely felt the loss.\(^{14}\)

Finally in September of 1650 Stuyvesant met with the representatives of the United Colonies at Hartford. The directors had advised that he antagonize neither the English nor the Swedes, as the Netherlands could ill-afford another enemy, now that the Company was involved in a costly war with Portugal in Brazil. They especially cautioned him to keep the peace with New England as the English were much too powerful for them. With this in mind Stuyvesant attempted to negotiate an agreeable boundary which would insure the security of New Netherland and eliminate the continual disputes involving an area long lost to the English anyway. The agreement established a line running just west of Oyster Bay across Long Island and northward 20 miles on the mainland. The Company was allowed to maintain its post of Fort Good Hope; however, it was only a matter of time before it was abandoned. Although the treaty was never ratified by the home countries it did buy Stuyvesant valuable time to turn his attention to his other pressing problems. In fact, discussions at Hartford also led to an agreement which would have a direct impact on Stuyvesant’s next major problem: the Swedes in the Delaware Valley.

*Fort Casimir*

\(^{13}\) *Correspondence*, 11:7d, letter from Gov. Winthrop to Petrus Stuyvesant.

\(^{14}\) *Correspondence*, 11:10b.
New Sweden had been established by Peter Minuit in 1638 and had succeeded in gaining a foothold in the trade with the Indians to the detriment and loss of the WIC. The Swedish fort, named Christina, on the west bank of the river, effectively cut Fort Nassau from the Indian trade. Although the Swedes were definitely a problem for Stuyvesant, his main concern was the English. Without a strong WIC presence in the Delaware Valley it was always possible that the English could occupy the southern frontier of New Netherland as they had done in Connecticut. Although the English were totally ignorant of the geographical significance of the Delaware Valley, they would soon discover that the river led directly north into the Indian country behind Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck. Occupation of the Delaware had the potential to cut off the Dutch fur trade in the north. The Swedes were too weak to carry this out; however, the English were not only capable of doing this but would have probably done so without hesitation.

English attempts to gain a foothold had been successfully thwarted in 1635 by Wouter van Twiller. But in 1641 a more serious threat developed when New Haven sent out people to form a settlement in the Schuylkill (Philadelphia). The Swedes and Dutch allied to prevent this attempt to settle by returning the settlers to New Haven aboard a Dutch ship and by burning their buildings. Both parties, although competing for the same trade in the Delaware Valley, realized that the greatest danger was English expansion and not each other.15

When Stuyvesant took control of New Netherland in 1648 he asked the commander on the Delaware, Andries Hudden, to draft a full report of Swedish activities. He immediately took aggressive action to counter the hostile actions of the Swedish governor, Johan Prints. Realizing that Fort Nassau was on the wrong side of the river, Stuyvesant ordered that a new post be built along the Schuylkill—a major trading route used by the Indians. The Swedes countered by building their own fort directly in front of the newly constructed Fort Beversreede; it was so close that the Dutch traders could barely walk out of their front door. Ships coming up the Schuylkill were unable to see Beversreede behind the Swedish structure. The Dutch did not have the proper strength and position in the Delaware to deal adequately with the aggressive behavior of the Swedes. Although Beversreede was now on the “right” side of the river, it was still upriver from Fort Christina. The Swedes could still impede river traffic to the Dutch post located farther to the north as it did with Fort Nassau. In any case, the major concern was still

For several years Stuyvesant was unable to deal forcefully with the Swedes because of threats from New Haven to form a colony in the Delaware Valley. He realized that if the English were allowed to settle there the entire colony would be threatened from behind. Swedish cooperation was needed in order to keep the English out. This all changed in 1650 with the signing of the Treaty of Hartford. Although the major points of agreement concerned the settlement of conflicting boundary claims between New England and New Netherland, one of the matters also resolved related to New Haven’s attempts to settle in the Delaware Valley. The agreement stated that any future attempt would not have the approval of the other colonies of New England, and that New Haven would be left to its own devices if trouble should arise as a result. Now that the New Haven threat seemed to be settled, Stuyvesant was ready to deal with the Swedes in a more decisive manner.

Although the Swedes posed a problem on the Delaware, Stuyvesant needed to strengthen his presence in this region to discourage any other foreign incursions. In 1651 an opportunity offered itself and Stuyvesant acted. Once again New Haven sent some 50 men aboard a ship to settle in the Delaware. Unfortunately for the English the ship was forced to put in at New Amsterdam. Stuyvesant promptly returned them. He reported the incident in a letter to the governor of Massachusetts and reminded the governor of their agreement. WIC weakness in the Delaware continued to attract forces intent on taking advantage of the situation. Stuyvesant clearly needed to act.16

Without instructions from his superiors in Amsterdam—except to maintain peaceful relations with the English and Swedes—Stuyvesant led an impressive military force into the Delaware Valley. Over 120 soldiers marched overland from Manhattan to link up with a fleet of eleven ships which sailed upriver to Fort Nassau to the sound of drums beating on their decks. With such a formidable force Stuyvesant could have eliminated the Swedish colony then and there; however, he was acting on his own initiative and did not want to ignite an international incident. Although the threat of force was evident, he carried out no hostile acts; he neither fired on Fort Christina as the ships sailed north, nor were any Swedish inhabitants harmed. Stuyvesant’s plans involved strategic maneuvering rather than war. When his naval and ground forces assembled at Fort Nassau (almost opposite the mouth of the Schuylkill) he proceeded to dismantle the fort and transport the guns and building material to a new site on the west side of the river.

The new location was known as Sant Hoeck by the Dutch (New Castle, 16 See Correspondence, 11:32.
Delaware). It had a deep harbor, access to western trade routes, and commanded the river. Not only did the Dutch now have a trading post for the Indian trade on the “right” side of the river, but its location south of Fort Christina gave them the ability to monitor and control any foreign and unauthorized river traffic. Stuyvesant named his new strong-hold Fort Casimir in memory of Ernst Casimir of the house of Orange-Nassau, a hero of his native province of Friesland. The directors’ reactions to Stuyvesant’s bold stroke are informative because they show that he had acted on his own initiative and was willing to take calculated risks. In a letter dated April 4, 1652, the directors wrote, “Your honor’s voyage to the South River and that which transpired between the Swedes and your honor, came before us quite unexpectedly, because your honor has previously never issued any warnings of his undertakings.” The directors questioned his choice of name as well as his decision to demolish Fort Nassau. They admonished him to guard the new fort well. In a later communication the directors cautioned Stuyvesant not to give any cause for complaint or dissatisfaction among the Swedes because they did not want to add to the Company’s enemies. The directors’ concerns about making more enemies was real. The first Anglo-Dutch war was about to begin.

**Beverwijck**

While Stuyvesant was engaged in his two external problems he did not neglect his major internal problem. The director of Rensselaerswijck, Brant van Slichtenhorst, continued to defy the Company’s authority. He refused to post proclamations passed by the council on Manhattan; he refused to allow cutting of the patroon’s timber. Slichtenhorst even prohibited his farmers from transporting building material for Fort Orange, which were urgently needed

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17 "The Lord grant that your honor’s enterprise may turn out well. We will be able to judge little about it here before we hear how the complaints of the Swedish governor are received by the queen. We hope that the arguments about our previous possession will be accepted as sufficient. However, we see little probability or any encouragement with the Swedes here that we will be able to arrange any boundaries. Also, we can say little about whether the demolition of Fort Nassau was so prudently handled. Indeed, no one could make a claim on it and whether the Swedes shall understand the same regarding the newly constructed fort named Casemirus, only time will tell. For what reason this fort was so named has not been revealed to us. It must be carefully protected in order not to be surprised. We do not know whether it would be highly necessary to make some fortifications on the east bank opposite this fort, and we must trust your honor’s wisdom therein.” *Correspondence*, 11:53.

when the fort was severely damaged by floods in 1648. To Stuyvesant this was not only a usurpation of the Company’s authority and supreme jurisdiction in New Netherland but it also was thwarting his plans to reestablish the Company’s control in this strategic region.

Although Stuyvesant reacted quickly to Slichtenhorst’s actions in the north, the distance between Fort Orange and Manhattan (150 miles) did not allow for quick execution of his orders. Communications were further impeded because the Hudson frequently froze during the winter months, isolating Fort Orange often from November to mid-April. Stuyvesant could also expect to wait six months or longer for instructions from his superiors in the Netherlands. Because of this, local directors and commanders were left to their own initiative for long periods of time; sometimes following courses of action which were contrary to the wishes of the Company’s directors. For almost four years Stuyvesant had sparred with Slichtenhorst; after his successes at Hartford and in the Delaware Valley, he was ready to deliver a knock-out blow.

Stuyvesant’s letters to the directors at Amsterdam (although no longer extant) must have contained detailed information about Slichtenhorst because every letter from the directors to Stuyvesant and the council of New Netherland between 1648 and 1652 contains at least one paragraph regarding the patroonship. There can be little doubt that he was being careful to advise the directors about the situation and waited for instructions before acting. He was aware that he was dealing with powerful forces in the Netherlands. Although the first patroon, Kiliaen van Rensselaer was dead, the patroonship still had many friends within the Company who would be sympathetic to its interests. Meanwhile Slichtenhorst proceeded with his plans to consolidate his non-agricultural people in the bijeenwooning north of Fort Orange. He continued to defy Stuyvesant’s prohibition against construction of houses within 3000 feet of the fort by granting new building lots; in fact, he went so far as to guarantee his settlers against loss if their buildings were damaged or destroyed by the Company. As a final act of defiance Slichtenhorst located the director’s residence well within cannon shot of the fort.

When Fort Orange’s commander Johannes Dijckman requested that some Company’s ordinances be posted in Rensselaerswijk, Slichtenhorst responded in a predictable manner, “In no way, as long as I have a drop of blood in my body, unless you first show me an authorization from our superiors in the Netherlands.” Stuyvesant had his pretext.19

19 Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswijk, translated by A. J. F. Van (Albany, 1922), 188.
As soon as the Hudson opened in the spring of 1652 Stuyvesant sent an armed force upriver. It carried an ordinance, passed in council, proclaiming the Company’s 3000-foot jurisdiction around the fort and ordered the erection of boundary posts.\(^{20}\) When Dijckman asked that a Company’s ordinance be posted, Slichtenhorst not only refused to do so but proceeded to tear down the newly erected boundary markers. This time Dijckman responded by visiting the director’s house with eight soldiers. He hauled down the patroon’s flag, rang the bell and proclaimed the establishment of the village and court of Beverwijck.\(^{21}\) Slichtenhorst was arrested and sent to Manhattan where he spent sixteen months in prison, during which time his term of office expired. The residents of the former bijeenwooningh were absolved of their oath to the patroon and allowed to swear allegiance to the Company, which all apparently did without protest.

Stuyvesant had reestablished the Company’s presence in the north at the expense of Rensselaerswijck. In one afternoon the patroonship had lost its major settlement and most of its non-agricultural inhabitants. Protests in the Netherlands were voiced by the heirs of the patroonship for over twenty years. Finally in 1674 the Company decided that the patroon was the rightful owner of the land under and around the fort. Since the province had been returned to England by the Treaty of Westminster at the end of the Third Anglo-Dutch War, the owners of Rensselaerswijck were referred to the king of England for restitution of their rights.\(^{22}\)

From Curaçao to Fort Orange, Stuyvesant displayed unique qualities as a leader. If the WIC had been looking for a man of action, they had found one. In his dealings with New Haven and the Swedes he demonstrated that he could act boldly; even risking international repercussions. In his dealings with Rensselaerswijck he proceeded with patience and caution; however, he acted swiftly once he received the proper signals. Stuyvesant’s first five years were filled with decisive activity from the seizing of the St. Beninjo to the military operation in the Delaware Valley. Stuyvesant’s actions in his first years as director general demonstrated a deftness and willingness to take risks in handling difficult situations whether caused by internal or external forces. The directors had been looking for someone with the ability to stabilize New Netherland after the setbacks suffered during Kieft’s administra-


\(^{21}\) *Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswijck*, 199.

tion; they could not have been disappointed.

THE COLONIAL MANUSCRIPTS

The provincial secretary was responsible for recording all the proceedings of the high council and maintaining the archives for future reference. The books of records were identified by single and double lettering system. The records making up this volume of correspondence come from a book marked “Q.” In the 1860s, when E. B. O’Callaghan was given the task of organizing and describing the Dutch colonial manuscripts kept in the New York Secretary of State’s office, he rearranged the original books according to his own conception of type and chronological order. Under this system, book “Q,” which was described in an 1820 catalogue of records as “letters from the Dutch West-India Company, from January 27, 1648 to February 1st 1664,” was reorganized to form O’Callaghan’s volumes XI through XV. The present volume is the first in this series, containing correspondence from 1647 to 1653.

This earliest surviving volume of correspondence from the archives of New Netherland represents almost entirely incoming letters from the directors in Amsterdam and the governors of neighboring colonies. Outgoing correspondence would have been copied into separate books for future reference. None of these letter books has survived with the exception of a fragment containing thirteen pages of text which Stuyvesant wrote to Andries Hudden, concerning administration of the Delaware region of New Netherland. The only other source for Stuyvesant’s letters to the directors is in the Bontemantel Papers at the New York Public Library. The New Netherland Collection among the Bontemantel Papers contain extracts of letters sent by Stuyvesant to the directors in Amsterdam from the years 1656 and 1657. Otherwise the letters in volumes XI through XV represent a one-way correspondence from the directors to Stuyvesant. Such a situation causes problems when replies are given for unknown requests and requests remain unanswered.

O’Callaghan’s arrangement of the Dutch records has been followed in the present translation for several reasons. First, it would have been impos-

23 See New York State Legislature, Senate Journal (1820) for this catalogue of records.
sible to re-establish the integrity of the original record book after it had been reorganized over 150 years ago. In the process of rearranging the records, O’Callaghan cut each book apart, interleaved the pages chronologically, and then had them rebound in leather covers, providing each volume with an introduction and an index. After the 1911 New York State Library fire, the leather covers, together with the front and back matter added by O’Callaghan, were discarded, leaving only what remained of the manuscripts themselves. Second, after O’Callaghan reorganized the Dutch records, he compiled a calendar citing their contents according to volume and manuscript page number. Because his calendar is still considered the primary access to the Dutch records by most scholars, it was decided not to destroy its usefulness as a guide.25

The 1911 Library fire caused much damage to the “Colonial Manuscripts” in general. Of the twenty-three volumes of records, arranged by O’Callaghan, only the first volume was completely destroyed. Volumes V through X suffered extensive damage because of their shelf location above the other Dutch records. In comparison to Volume X, which has several inches burned away at the top of each folio page, Volume XI suffered loss mostly along the exposed edge of each page. As it was customary for Dutch clerks to write to the very edge of each page in order to prevent additional text from being inserted, while leaving a broad margin on the left side for notations, every other page suffered loss at the end of each line. The damaged areas are reflected in the present translation by the use of empty brackets, with the space between the brackets approximating the amount of text lost. Those portions of the text enclosed in brackets represent the recovery of text through translations made before the fire. The majority of these translations appear in Volumes XII–XIV of NYCD, edited by Berthold Fernow. See Appendix A for a key to Fernow’s translations of the material in Volume XI.

The present translator has attempted to remain true to the writing style in the correspondence. Each letter has been laid out as close as possible to the form of the original. Proper names have been transcribed exactly as they appear in the text, with the index recording the variations after the most common form of the name. For the English equivalent of seventeenth-century Dutch measurements, weights, and money, consult Appendix B. The numbers enclosed in brackets represent the volume and manuscript number as recorded in O’Callaghan’s calendar.

25 Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, edited by E. B. O’ Callaghan (Albany, 1865).
Volume XII

Correspondence, 1654–1658

Volume XII of the Dutch Colonial Manuscripts contains the correspondence of Petrus Stuyvesant, director general of New Netherland, from 1654–1658. By the end of 1653 Stuyvesant had resolved the long-festering dispute with Rensselaerswijck by establishing the jurisdiction of Fort Orange/Beverwijck; stabilized the border with New England at the treaty of Hartford; and outmaneuvered the Swedes on the Delaware by erecting Fort Casimir. However, the New Year began with ominous clouds on the horizon.

In January of 1654 the West India Company [WIC] suffered a severe disruption in its Atlantic commercial world. The fifteen-year Portuguese revolt against Dutch holdings in Brazil had culminated in the fall of Recife and the treaty of Taborda. The lucrative sugar and dyewood trade had been lost. Although the loss of Brazil was a major blow to the WIC’s Atlantic trade, it proved to be a benefit to New Netherland. Instead of struggling on as a neglected corner of the WIC’s Atlantic interests, New Netherland’s potential as an integral link in New World commercial activities was realized. After 1654 New Netherland attracted more financial support and competent personnel from the WIC; most of which would have been previously directed to Brazil.

Closer to home the Swedes were sending a relief ship to its struggling Delaware colony. The previous year Johan Printz, governor of New Sweden, had left the fledgling colony in frustration. A contributing factor must have been the loss of the Swedish relief ship Kattan off the coast of Puerto Rico in 1650. It was a disastrous blow to the fledgling colony already starved for supplies and reinforcements. Printz learned of the loss in a letter from Stuyvesant, who was closely monitoring Swedish developments on the South River.¹ Although the Swedish colony was well positioned on the west bank of the Delaware it could not compete with the new Dutch trading post of Fort Casimir if it did not receive goods to trade with the Indians. When Printz decided to return to Sweden he was forced to travel overland to Manhattan. He set sail aboard a Dutch ship in October of 1653 unaware that preparations were nearly complete in Sweden to send over his replacement and 350 new

¹ See Delaware Papers, 1648–1664, NYHM, Appendix B, p. 362 for a translation of this letter.
colony. A bold decision by Johan Rising, the new governor, was about to change the balance of power in the Delaware.

More serious for the future of New Netherland was the possibility of invasion from New England. Although the first Anglo-Dutch war was drawing to a close, Cromwell had commissioned Robert Sedgwick in 1654 to command four warships in an invasion of New Netherland. The previous year the New England colonies were unable to unify for an invasion of New Netherland during the height of the war. Stuyvesant had countered raids of Dutch settlements on Long Island from Connecticut by forming a mobile strike force. He also acted quickly to protect New Amsterdam from possible invasion by building the wall across the island north of the city and strengthening the city’s defenses in general. In spite of these preparations a unified New England supported by Sedgwick’s naval force would have probably brought an end to the WIC’s possession in North America. However, Sedgwick received news of the peace of Westminster before any of this could happen. New Netherland had a reprieve of ten years.

Unfortunately, Stuyvesant’s decision to defend the center of New Netherland against incursions from New England created vulnerabilities elsewhere. When Johan Rising, the new governor of the Swedish colony, arrived in the Delaware River on Trinity Sunday of 1654 he encountered a Dutch fort that had been stripped of its defenses. When Rising put twenty Swedish muskeeteers ashore to assess the situation at Fort Casimir, only eight Dutch soldiers could respond to muster. The defenders of the fort laid down their arms without firing a shot. Once again the Delaware was completely in control of the Swedes. Stuyvesant was in a difficult position. The West India Company directors in Amsterdam were already displeased that he had dismantled Fort Nassau on the east side of the river in favor of constructing Fort Casimir on the west side without their knowledge. They later admonished him to take good care of this new fort built without their permission. With the loss of Fort Casimir the Dutch no longer had a presence on the Delaware River. However, Stuyvesant’s anger probably subsided when the Swedish ship Gyllene Haj was brought into the harbor at Manhattan. The Shark had been following Rising by almost four months because of delays in Sweden and a separate mission to investigate the circumstances of the loss of the relief ship Kattan near Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, the Swedish ship missed the entrance to Delaware. Instead it sailed in behind Staten Island where it was seized and brought to Stuyvesant’s attention. Oblivious to protests from Rising, Stuyvesant retorted that he would release the ship as soon as the Delaware was returned to him.
The directors in Amsterdam reacted quickly to the situation. They instructed Stuyvesant simply to drive the Swedes from the river and recover what belonged to the Company. The directors followed this response with a request for copies of land titles on the South River in order to support their claims. Revenge for the loss of Fort Casimir was at hand; however, other matters could be attended to first during the winter months. Instead of planning his next move against New Sweden, Stuyvesant decided to sail to the Caribbean during the final month of 1654. The war with England was over; hostile encounters at sea were no longer a major factor; and a harsh, cold winter was rapidly approaching. New Sweden could wait until favorable weather permitted; now Stuyvesant was on a mission to investigate commercial possibilities in the Caribbean.

On 24 December 1654 Stuyvesant left for the Caribbean aboard DePeereboom accompanied by two other ships. His small fleet was carrying stores of goods and merchandise for trade in the islands. Although we have no hard evidence, it appears that his intention was to test the English Navigation Acts after the conclusion of the war and in the process establish a commercial relationship with Barbados. Stuyvesant and his entourage arrived at the English-held island around the first of the year and immediately began to do business. His appearance was enhanced and strengthened by five other Dutch ships, which were in the harbor upon his arrival. Nothing succeeds more in trade negotiations than the ability to deliver the goods. The response of the Barbadians was very positive for establishing trade relations with New Netherland. However, on 19 January 1655 the mood suddenly changed.

Unknown to Stuyvesant he had sailed into dangerous waters. No sooner were the Dutch ships safely anchored and favorable negotiations begun with the English officials on the island than a large fleet of English warships and transports sailed into Carlisle Bay. The naval force was under the command of Admiral William Penn whose mission it was to take the Spanish-held island of Hispaniola according to the Cromwell’s newly enacted initiative against Spain called the Western Design. Penn was using Barbados as a staging area preliminary to his attack on Hispaniola. The Dutch were in deep trouble. Not only were they trading in an English colony contrary to the Navigation Acts but were also likely to report Penn’s presence and strength to the Spaniards. Penn immediately had the eight Dutch ships impounded and placed four trusted men aboard each vessel. Matters could not have been

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2 See Correspondence, 1647–1653, 12:3, page 36 and 12:17, page 42 for these reactions in letters from the directors in Amsterdam to Petrus Stuyvesant, dated 16 and 23 November 1654
worse for Stuyvesant. What seemed to be a successful venture to establish much-needed commercial relations for his budding province had turned into a nightmare. Instead he was surrounded by thirty-five English ships commanded by a loyal adherent of Cromwell who was inclined to burn the Dutch ships for illegal trade activities. More serious, the directors in Amsterdam only found out about Stuyvesant’s voyage to the Caribbean when he wrote them from Barbados. Instead of carrying out or, at least, planning an expedition against the Swedes in the Delaware, their commander in New Netherland was far from home on an unauthorized voyage with uncertain consequences.

In the end the prospect of trade triumphed. At a court proceeding English merchants, representing Penn, pleaded the case of parliament against the “strangers,” basing their complaint on the Navigation Acts of 3 October 1650 and 9 October 1651 (both dates old style). Stuyvesant pled the case of the Dutch merchants. Although a transcript of the proceedings does not survive, he must have been effective. In spite of the clear prohibition against “foreigners” trading with Virginia, Barbados and other Caribbean islands the jury “found for the strangers against parliament and state, grounding all upon the articles of Barbados.”

Stuyvesant appeared to be leading a charmed life. He had gone from the prospect of having his ships burned to being sent off in “a triumphant manner” with the invitation to trade freely at the island. His stay in Barbados had demonstrated that local politics ruled over national politics. Unless the English were able to maintain a naval presence at Barbados the Dutch could continue to trade with impunity. Stuyvesant and the Dutch ships were released from the embargo and allowed to set sail as soon as Penn’s fleet cleared the area. On 21 March 1655, the three ships from New Netherland made for Curaçao.

Curaçao was on Stuyvesant’s itinerary because it was not only part of his responsibility as director general and critical to a commercial network in the Caribbean, but it was also in need of new leadership. Lucas van Rodenburgh, the vice director of Curaçao, Bonaire, and Aruba, had been requesting a replacement for some time. By chance or design Stuyvesant was bringing relief in the person of Matthias Beck. He had been a WIC employee in Brazil, serving as director of Siara, the silver mining province of New Holland. When

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4  Thurloe Papers, Volume III, page 249.
5  Ibid.
the Dutch evacuated their holdings in Brazil in 1654 Beck turned up in Tobago off the coast of Venezuela. Shortly before Stuyvesant’s arrival Beck had made his way to Barbados. It was a classic case of being in the right place at the right time.

Before Stuyvesant left Curaçao on June 24th he installed Beck as vice director and drafted instructions for his office. We are unaware whether he received any word from the directors at Curaçao regarding their displeasure but he must have had New Sweden on his mind. His winter tour of the Caribbean had turned into a seven-month adventure. While Stuyvesant sailed the waters of the Caribbean, the Swedes reigned supreme on the Delaware. In a letter to the council at New Amsterdam the directors expressed their disappointment that the Swedes had not been taken care of and exhorted the council to take up the mission should Stuyvesant not return. In order to insure success the directors chartered De Waagh, thirty-six-gun warship belonging to the City of Amsterdam, to support the enterprise. As soon as Stuyvesant arrived back at Manhattan on July 11th he began preparations for his expedition to recover control of the Delaware.

Stuyvesant acted quickly. By September he was able to organize an invasion force of seven ships, including De Waagh; on board the ships were 350 soldiers. After church service on September 5th Stuyvesant set sail for the Delaware. With drums beating on deck he sailed under the guns of Fort Trefaldighet—formerly Fort Casimir. His bold move seemed to paralyze the Swedish commander. As soon as the Dutch ships had passed north of the fort troops were landed who quickly cut the road to Fort Christina—the main Swedish stronghold. With no prospect of reinforcements the Swedes at Fort Trefaldighet were forced to surrender. Stuyvesant then marched his five companies of troops north to lay siege to Fort Christina. Within a week the Dutch had control of all the Swedish possessions on the Delaware.

The euphoria of such quick success soon turned to shock. While Stuyvesant was maneuvering against the Swedes on the Delaware, a large force of Indians from various nations attacked Manhattan. When Stuyvesant received a report of the attack from the council at Manhattan it included the conjecture that the Swedes were behind it. When the Dutch troops heard the news they went berserk. What had been a relatively clean operation between Europeans turned into one of wanton destruction. Whether or not the Swedes were in league with the attacking Indians did not change the outcome. Although much damage was done on Staten Island and Pavonia—in the area of pres-

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6 The Swedes used the name Fort Trefaldighet or Fort Trinity because on 21 May 1654, Trinity Sunday.
ent-day Jersey City—the Swedes lost their colony in North America.

The so-called Peach War was a continuation of friction with the Indians, which flared up from time to time. The first major hostilities began under the directorship of Willem Kieft and almost destroyed New Netherland. Although Stuyvesant’s first encounter with Indians on the Manhattan rim during the Peach War dealt severe blows to settlements on Staten Island and in New Jersey, a few years later a much more disturbing confrontation would take place north of Manhattan in the Esopus region—present-day Kingston and Ulster County. Events leading up to this war with the Indians in the mid-Hudson Valley are the subject of the final letters of this volume.

Besides the destruction caused by the Indians and Dutch soldiers there were two direct consequences which reshaped New Netherland as result of the Peach War and the takeover of New Sweden. First, in order to repay the loan of the Waegh the WIC ceded the Delaware River from Fort Casimir to Boompties Hoek (present-day Bombay Hook) to the city of Amsterdam. This new entity within the jurisdiction of New Netherland was to be administered by the mayors of Amsterdam through its director at former Fort Casimir, now called New Amstel. The second consequence was the consolidation of settlements into defensible villages. Although attempts to force the scattered Swedish and Finnish settlements into villages met with little success, the move toward consolidation led to the formation of the village of Wiltwijck [Indian District] at the Esopus.

As in his first six years Stuyvesant continued to demonstrate qualities of leadership. At the end of the war with England he seized the opportunity to travel to the Caribbean. If New Netherland was going to compete with the English colonies, it needed to expand its commercial relations. Stuyvesant knew the potential of trade with the Caribbean since his governorship of Curaçao ten years earlier. With the fall of Brazil in 1654 New Netherland was on the verge of becoming the focus of WIC trade activities in the New World. Stuyvesant’s strategy to establish commercial bonds with the Caribbean islands could only promote this development. Bold leadership was also a risky business. It meant making many decisions without the knowledge or approval of superiors. Stuyvesant’s decision to dismantle Fort Nassau and build Fort Casimir on the west bank of the Delaware was tactically a good decision but a disaster when the Swedes easily seized the only Dutch stronghold in the southern region. The directors became further frustrated with Stuyvesant when they learned that he was virtually a captive on Barbados when he should have been moving against the Swedes. However, time and again Stuyvesant turned a bad situation to his advantage. Not only was he
able to argue his case successfully on Barbados but also had the leadership attributes to put together an invasion force in a short time and eliminate Swedish competition in the Delaware. Whether bold or reckless the directors certainly had a director who was exciting.

Colonial Administration

The provincial secretary was responsible for recording all the proceedings of the high council and maintaining the archives for future reference. The books of records were identified by a single and double lettering system. The records making up this volume of correspondence come from books marked “Q,” “T,” and “V.” In the 1860s, when E.B. O’Callaghan undertook the task of organizing and describing the Dutch colonial manuscripts kept in the New York Secretary of State’s office, he rearranged the original books according to his own conception of type and chronological order. Under this system book “Q,” which was described in an 1820 catalogue of records as “letters from the Dutch West-India Company, from January 27, 1648 to February 1st 1664,” was reorganized to form O’Callaghan’s volumes XI through XV. In addition to extracting all letters which fell within the period of 1654 through 1658 for volume XII, he also extracted letters from book “T,” containing “letters from Esopus, in 1658 and 1663” and from book “V,” containing “letters from Esopus to Governor Stuyvesant, from 1658 to 1664.”

This earliest surviving volume of correspondence from the archives of New Netherland represents almost entirely incoming letters from the directors in Amsterdam and the governors of neighboring colonies. Outgoing correspondence would have been copied into separate books for future reference. None of these letter books has survived with the exception of a fragment containing thirteen pages of text, which Stuyvesant wrote to Andries Hudden, concerning administration of the Delaware region of New Netherland. The only other source for Stuyvesant’s letters to the directors is in the Bontemantel Papers at the New York Public Library. The New Netherland Collection among the Bontemantel Papers contains extracts of letters sent by Stuyvesant to the directors in Amsterdam from the years 1656 and 1657. Otherwise, the majority of the letters in volumes XI through XV represent a one-way correspondence from the directors to Stuyvesant. Such a situation causes problems when replies are given for unknown requests and requests remain unanswered.

O’Callaghan’s arrangement of the Dutch records has been followed in
the present translation for several reasons. First, it would have been impossible to re-establish the integrity of the original record book after it had been reorganized over 150 years ago. In the process of rearranging the records, O'Callaghan cut each book apart, interleaved the pages chronologically, and then had them rebound in leather covers, providing each volume with an introduction and an index. After the 1911 New York State Library fire, the leather covers, together with the front and back matter added by O'Callaghan, were discarded, leaving only what remained of the manuscripts themselves. Second, after O'Callaghan reorganized the Dutch records, he compiled a calendar citing their contents according to volume and manuscript page number. Because his calendar is still considered the primary access to the Dutch records by most scholars, it was decided not to destroy its usefulness as a guide.

The 1911 Library fire caused much damage to the “Colonial Manuscripts” in general. Of the twenty-three volumes of records, arranged by O'Callaghan, only the first volume was completely destroyed. Volumes V through X suffered extensive damage because of their shelf location above the other Dutch records. In comparison to Volume X, which has several inches burned away at the top of each folio page, Volume XII suffered loss mostly along the exposed edge of each page. As it was customary for Dutch clerks to write to the very edge of each page in order to prevent additional text from being inserted, while leaving a broad margin on the left side for notations, every other page suffered loss at the end of each line. The damaged areas are reflected in the present translation by the use of empty brackets, with the space between the brackets approximating the amount of text lost. Those portions of the text enclosed in brackets represent the recovery of text through translations made before the fire. The majority of these translations appear in Volumes XII–XIV of NYCD, edited by Berthold Fernow. See Appendix A for a key to Fernow’s translations of the material in Volume XII.

The present translator has attempted to remain true to the writing style in the correspondence. Each letter has been laid out as close as possible to the form of the original. Proper names have been transcribed exactly as they appear in the text, with the index recording the variations after the most common form of the name. For the English equivalent of seventeenth-century Dutch measurements, weights, and money, consult Appendix B. The numbers enclosed in brackets represent the volume and manuscript number as recorded in O'Callaghan’s calendar.
By 1609 the Hapsburg Empire had tacitly recognized the existence of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. After more than forty years of unsuccessful attempts to stamp out this revolt in the low countries, Spain sought a period of time to lick its wounds and consolidate its hold on the ten lower provinces. The Twelve Years’ Truce was mostly the work of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, pensionary of Holland, who represented the agenda of the remonstrants: religious toleration, decentralized government, and peace with Spain. This party was identified with the followers of Arminius, a theologian at the University of Leiden, who called for a less rigid interpretation of the Reformed Church’s doctrine of predestination. Arminius was strongly opposed by a fellow theologian at Leiden named Gomarus, an adherent of a strict interpretation of predestination. He led the counter-remonstrants in their drive for a national religion under the Reformed Church, a strong centralized government, and renewal of the war with Spain.

What should have been twelve years of peace turned out to be more than a decade of turmoil and near civil war. When Maurits, the prince of Orange, son of Willem the Silent, saw the advantage of supporting the Gomarists and consolidating his power by becoming the leader of a strong centralized government once again at war with his archenemy, he convened the Synod of Dordrecht in order to resolve the theological debate. With Prince Maurits’s support the Gomarist position won the day. Van Oldenbarnevelt was arrested, tried, and beheaded on trumped up charges of treason. Hugo Grotius, the great legal mind of the Netherlands and strong advocate of the Arminian position, was also arrested and sentenced to life in prison. After three years under confinement, Grotius’s wife managed to smuggle him out in a crate used to transport his research books in and out of prison. He spent the rest of his years in exile in France and Sweden. While in prison, however, he did make good use of the books that his wife brought him by writing the famous *Inleiding tot de Hollandsche Rechtsgeleerdheid*, or “Introduction to the Jurisprudence of Holland.” With the death of Van Oldenbarnevelt and the exile of Grotius the Netherlands had lost its greatest and most eloquent advocates.
of peace. In 1621 the truce was allowed to lapse and war with Spain was resumed.

The East India Company had been in operation as a joint-stock trading venture since 1602. Chartered by the States General of the Netherlands, the East India Company had a trading monopoly from the Cape of Good Hope east to the Strait of Magellan. It had the power to raise its own armies and navies, make alliances with local sovereigns within its sphere of operations, and if necessary could make war and conclude peace in defense of its interests. Company shares were traded on the Amsterdam stock exchange and investors represented a broad spectrum of society: from wealthy merchants to tavern keepers and bar maids. At the conclusion of the Twelve Years’ Truce, the States General saw an opportunity to privatize the overseas war with Spain by chartering another joint-stock venture with a trading monopoly from the Cape of Good Hope westward to the outer reaches of New Guinea. The company was divided into five chambers at Amsterdam, Zeeland (Middelburgh), Maes (Rotterdam), Noorderquartier (Hoorn and Enkhuizen), and Groningen-Friesland. The number of directors on the governing board was determined by the chambers’ financial obligation. As the largest investor Amsterdam sent eight, followed by Zeeland with four, and the other three chambers with two each; the States General sent one representative for a total of nineteen. This powerful board was known as de heeren negentien, i.e., “the lords nineteen,” often represented in documents by the roman numerals XIX. Thus the West India Company (WIC) was formed more as an instrument of war than a vehicle of commerce. Whereas nineteen years earlier the East India Company was able to raise six and a half million guilders in one month to capitalize its enterprise, it took the WIC two years to raise seven million guilders. As soon as ships were outfitted and equipped, the WIC made its presence felt against enemy colonies and interests from Africa to Brazil. Especially vulnerable were the possessions of Portugal, which had been united under the Spanish crown since 1580. WIC preoccupation with lucrative interests in Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, however, left few resources, either human or monetary, for its fur trading outpost in North America.
New Netherland

When Henry Hudson, sailing for the East India Company in 1609, explored Delaware Bay and the river to the north now carrying his name, little did he know that it would be the foundation of a Dutch claim to a massive territory from Cape Henlopen at the mouth of Delaware Bay to the Connecticut River. From these chance maneuverings between what would become New England and the tobacco colonies of Maryland and Virginia developed a colony that had its roots in Europe rather than in England. For the greater part of the seventeenth century not only would the Netherlands compete with England for the mastery of the high seas, but also obstruct her drive for hegemony in North America.

Shortly after Hudson’s explorations various trading companies were licensed by the States General to trade with the natives in the major waterways from Maine to Virginia. By 1614, competition between traders had become so fierce and bloody that the New Netherland Company was chartered as a monopoly to trade in the region in order to stabilize the situation. Trading cartels were allowed to send out four voyages within three years between the latitudes of 40 and 45 degrees (Barnegat Bay, New Jersey, and Eastport, Maine). The main base of operations became Fort Nassau, which was built to serve as a trading post on Castle Island, now mostly occupied by the port of Albany. From this post expeditions were sent into the interior in search of mineral deposits to exploit, and an active trade with the natives was carried on. When the charter expired in 1618 and Fort Nassau was destroyed by a spring freshet, the territory was once again open to cut-throat trading activities. Although the WIC was chartered in 1621 it took almost two years for it to raise enough money to finance its first effort to take possession of its holdings along the Delaware, Hudson, and Connecticut Rivers.

After some initial experiments with satellite trading posts supported by agricultural communities on the three major river systems, Manhattan was chosen as the administrative center of the colony and the place most suitable for warehousing and trans-shipping furs to the Netherlands; the island had an ideal harbor, free of ice year round, and was large enough to establish any number of support farms. In spite of some serious mistakes in the early years with the Mohawks, the easternmost nation of Iroquois, the Dutch forged a strong alliance with this tribe that controlled the most important trade route to the interior. At first the colony grew slowly and almost seemed to stagnate. People wishing to leave the Netherlands chose other places to seek their for-
tunes: France, England, East India Company colonies, and the WIC’s own colony of New Holland in Brazil. New Netherland was still not thought to be particularly inviting. However, every year brought more and more displaced persons into the Netherlands, fleeing the disruptions of the Baltic wars, the Thirty Years’ War, and religious persecution in France, not to mention the disruption in the United Provinces caused by the protracted war with Spain. By the 1650s, however, these displaced persons would also be considering New Netherland for their future home.

Several factors led to an improved climate in the colony. The end of the disastrous Indian wars under director general Kieft were followed by increased trading activity with the English colonies as a result of the turmoil created by the civil war in England. A series of inept administrators had forced the directors in Amsterdam to take more care in the selection process. In 1647 Petrus Stuyvesant arrived as director general, furnishing the colony with a firm and fair hand. The fall of New Holland in Brazil to the Portuguese in 1654 freed up WIC human and financial resources for its long-neglected colony in North America. The end of the first Anglo-Dutch war in 1654 created a feeling of optimism in the colony, and, of course, a false sense of security. Increased activity of private traders, especially encouraged by Stuyvesant’s relations with the Caribbean, augured well for the future. Finally, the elimination of New Sweden on the Delaware as a political and commercial competitor led to the city of Amsterdam’s establishment of a colony. With its benefactor’s wealth and ready immigrants, New Amstel had a bright future. However, all this changed when Charles II, king of England, granted the territory containing New Netherland to his brother James, duke of York and Albany. The Dutch would return in 1673 during the third Anglo-Dutch war and regain the colony as easily as it was lost nine years earlier, only to bargain it away at the treaty of Westminster.

**Colonial Administration**

The success of a colonial administrator in New Netherland depended as much on luck, intuitive judgment, and the courage to make bold decisions on matters often supported only by faulty intelligence and rumor, as it did on strict adherence to WIC instructions. Directors of the colony often had to wait over a year to receive approval of requests, reaction to decisions, and clarification and amplification of WIC policy. In some cases pressing matters had been disposed of long before instructions or approval were received
from Amsterdam. Directors such as Verhulst, Minuit, Van Twiller, and Kieft all proved to be unsuited to the task of operating a remote colony under these conditions. All returned to the Netherlands either under a cloud of mismanagement or ineptitude. Even Stuyvesant provoked the Amsterdam directors with his actions; but his errors always seemed to be the result of boldness and decisiveness rather than pettiness and inertia.

The earliest surviving instructions for directors of the colony are those issued to Willem Verhulst in 1625. They state with utter simplicity the structure of government to be observed. Verhulst was to serve as director of the colony assisted by a council, which consisted of his commissary, secretary, schout, and any skippers in port at the time. This body carried out all executive, legislative and judicial functions of the colony. The instructions also dealt with specific legal matters, such as the punishment for persons who illegally slaughtered animals. However, the director was instructed to observe and obey the ordinances and customs of Holland in matters concerning marriage, settlement of estates, and contracts; and in cases of intestate estates to observe the placard issued by the States of Holland in 1587. There is a reference in the instructions that copies of these papers had been sent. Finally, the director was admonished not to pass any new laws or ordinances or sanction any new customs without the approval of the WIC directors. Even after the colony had grown in population and new communities had sprung up from Beverwijck in the north to Fort Casimir in the south, the nature of this highly centralized governing body remained essentially the same.

In 1644 the first court other than that of the central administration on Manhattan was formed at Heemstede. This court, which was in response to an influx of settlers from Connecticut, was followed by one at Gravesande in 1645 and one at Breuckelen in 1646. The increase of population on Manhattan was accompanied by an increase in legal activity: lawsuits, petty squabbles, and other nuisances best handled by arbitrators rather than the full central council. In order to keep the council from being swamped by such cases, a court of arbitrators, consisting of nine men, was established in 1647. Their function was to decide cases referred to them by the council; however, judgments were subject to appeal before the council. This board relieved the council of its increasingly heavy case load until February of 1653, when New Amsterdam received its charter as a municipality. The court of arbitrators was at this time replaced by a court of schout, burgomasters and schepenen. Other benches of justice were erected at Flushing in 1648, Beverwijck and

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1 Verhulst’s instructions can be found *Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624–1626*, A.J.F. van Laer trans. and ed. (San Marino, CA, 1924).
Middelburgh in 1652, Amesfoort and Midwout in 1654, Westchester and Rustdorp (Jamaica) in 1656, Haerlem in 1660, Bushwijk, Wiltwijck (Kings-tion), Bergen, and New Utrecht in 1661, and Staten Island in 1664. The laws and ordinances enacted by the council on Manhattan were binding in all communities within New Netherland, unless they exclusively applied to a specific locality. Attempts by the patroonships, especially Rensselaerswijck, to exercise their independence and remain outside the jurisdiction of the council's ordinances, led to disputes that eventually were resolved in favor of the WIC. By 1658 Rensselaerswijck was required to post WIC ordinances in its jurisdiction and submit its own ordinances for approval by the council on Manhattan as did all other communities in New Netherland.

Although the council on Manhattan served as a control on ordinances submitted by inferior courts, it too had to submit its ordinances to the scrutiny of the directors in Amsterdam. Several times ordinances were returned with the directors' expression of disapproval. Once the council was sternly advised to adhere strictly to the customs and ordinances of the city of Amsterdam, a copy of which had been supplied the council for consultation, in order to prevent such future conflicts. Another time certain resolutions adopted by the lantdach, an assembly consisting of representatives from the inferior courts, were rejected by the directors, who found it especially strange that the resolutions had been published without waiting for their approval. When ordinances were approved by the directors, they were sometimes revised and then returned to New Netherland in printed form. Unfortunately, none of these printed copies of ordinances is still among the records.

The laws of Holland, according to which the council on Manhattan was to regulate itself, had been systematized by Hugo Grotius in his Introduction to the Jurisprudence of Holland, which had appeared in 1631. By this work Grotius contributed to making Roman-Dutch law accessible as a legal system. As with the legal systems of other countries, Holland's system of law reflected the various stages of its historical development and the effect of outside influences. From the ancient customs derived from Germanic law, to the considerable influence of the Roman code of Justinian (the corpus juris), to the canon law of the Catholic Church, to the special privileges gained from support of one monarch or another, they had all contributed to the confused mass of law that Grotius was able to systematize in such a clear and concise manner. It soon became regarded as the authoritative work on Roman-Dutch law and rose rapidly in popularity because it was written in Dutch rather than Latin.

In addition to Grotius, the council on Manhattan, and probably the in-
ferior courts, including those of the patroonships, would have had copies of the following works at their disposal: *Ordonantie van de Policien binnen Hollandt*, usually cited simply as the “Political Ordinance.” Published shortly after the Union of Utrecht in 1580, it was the States of Holland’s response to the massive confusion in the laws of the province. This early attempt to bring some uniformity to legal matters regarding marriage, succession, sales, leases, mortgages and registration would have been a standard reference for the courts of New Netherland. Other works included Joost van Damhouder’s *Praktycq Crimineel*, one of the earliest treatments of criminal procedure, and Paul Merula’s 1592 treatise on the *Civil Procedure of the Courts of Holland, Zeeland and West Friesland*, which was considered the standard work on the practice of the Dutch superior courts. The directors also sent over a copy of the *Groot Placaetboek van Amsterdam*, which was a compilation of the edicts and ordinances of the city of Amsterdam. Not only were these legal volumes available in the colony, but also the uniformity and precision of the legal proceedings indicate that they were actively consulted.

The Dutch Colonial Manuscripts

In 1689, shortly after Jacob Leisler assumed control of the New York provincial government, an inventory was made of the records in the office of the provincial secretary. Following the various English records appears an entry which simply indicates the presence of “some old Dutch record books and bundles of papers.” Not until 1820 do we find out more details about these Dutch records. In that year Secretary of State Christopher Yates ordered another inventory of the records in his office, in which each Dutch record book was listed with a short description of its contents. Among the forty-some books carrying the original Dutch alphabetical designations are: “No. 13 Book marked M contains laws and regulations from 1647 to 1658”; and “No. 14 Book marked N contains the Burgomasters’ laws and ordinances of 1656.” These books are the source of the records in the first part of this volume. The writs of appeal contained in the second part are not recorded as a separate entity in the inventory. They may have been recorded in another record book, or they may have been unbound and among the bundles of papers mentioned in 1689.

Ideally these record books should have been preserved in their original state. Not only is it important for the historian to know that the juxtaposition of records was the result of the secretary or clerk operating under the
pressures and exigencies of the period, but that certain idiosyncrasies and anomalies reveal certain details about the operations of various officials and administrations otherwise lost. For example, it was the style of one secretary to record all the ordinances for a given year at the end of the book of council minutes; another recorded the full text of the ordinance as an entry in the minutes for that session of the council. In order to maintain the archival integrity of the Dutch records these ordinances will appear in their original environment. However, the records in this volume of colonial manuscripts constitute another problem.

When the archivist E. B. O’Callaghan became custodian of the colonial manuscripts in the 1850s, he probably perceived his mission to bring order out of chaos. At that time the records were still in the possession of the secretary of state and stored in the attic of the Albany City Hall. Papers were strewn over the floor and everything was in a deplorable state. O’Callaghan needed an orderly access to these records in order to begin his new career as a translator. His History of New Netherland had depended heavily on the unpublished translations of the Dutch records by Francis Adriaen vander Kemp. He had concluded that there were many problems with these translations and that a new translation should be undertaken. While researching land titles among the Dutch records for parties involved in the Rensselaerswijk rent wars, he was forced to confront the Dutch originals and decipher their contents. By 1850 he had acquired such experience and reputation as a Dutch translator that he was selected to translate and edit the documents relating to the history of New York brought back from Europe by John Romayne Brodhead.

O’Callaghan devoted himself to his new career with diligence and energy. Unfortunately he did not view the records in the attic as a corpus of archival memory. Throughout the centuries they had been moved from the secretary’s office in Fort Amsterdam by wagon to Boston during King James II’s short-lived Dominion of New England, transported for storage aboard warships in New York harbor during the American Revolution, before finally finding their way to Albany. Each relocation caused further damage to the record books and exposed them to the normal hazards associated with transit; however, what was not damaged or destroyed, at least remained intact in its original context. O’Callaghan, on the other hand, viewed the records primarily as a gold mine of information concerning New York’s colonial history under the Dutch, and began preparations to open the mine. The archival integrity of the Dutch archives apparently was of no concern to him. While using Vander Kemp’s translations, he was probably annoyed and frustrated
by the apparent haphazard organization of the records. For example, in order to search through the minutes of Stuyvesant's council, books B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, P, AA, and DD had to be consulted. O'Callaghan saw no reason to maintain this arrangement, and set about establishing his own organization. The result of his improvement was a series of volumes each containing a type of archival record in chronological order: Volumes I–III, containing secretarial papers, were originally books CC and W; Volumes IV–X, council minutes, were books A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, P, AA and DD; Volumes XI–XV, correspondence, were books Q, T, V, X, BB, KK and EE; and Volume XVI constituted books M, N and LL. This volume is a bit odd because it appears to be a collection of archival types that refused to fit elsewhere. Divided into four parts, part 1 contains laws and ordinances, part 2 Fort Orange records, part 3 Fort Orange records, and part 4 writs of appeal. O'Callaghan then continued this typological scheme with volume XVII, Curacao papers, books MM and NN; volume XVIII–XXI, Delaware papers, books R, S and FF; volume XXIII, Colve administration, books L, KK and Z. For some unexplained reason O'Callaghan did not assign a volume number to the land papers but retained the Dutch designations of GG, HH and II. The old Dutch record books were torn apart and reassembled according to the above arrangement. Before being rebound in leather bindings, each volume was provided with an introduction and index. This front and back matter supplied by O'Callaghan, including the new leather bindings were all lost in the 1911 State Library fire.

After rearranging the Dutch record books and bundles of papers, O'Callaghan set to work on a guide to the collection, which was published in 1865 as A Calendar of the Historical Dutch Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, New York. Over the years this guide has been the primary access to the Dutch colonial records. In some cases the chronological entries describing each document are the only information remaining about the contents of pages partly or completely destroyed in the 1911 fire. This guide had become so important to researchers as a quick survey of the Dutch records and the volume and page designations so familiar in scholarly citations that the New Netherland Project decided to maintain the integrity of the guide, as it appeared that the original archival integrity of the Dutch records was beyond recovery. The only alteration made with the present volume has been to group O'Callaghan’s part 1 and part 4 together as simply Volume XVI, part 1 in the New Netherland Documents series. Parts 2 and 3, Fort Orange records, are now combined as Volume XVI, part 2, The Fort Orange Court Minutes, in the same series.
It is important to remember that the ordinances and writs of appeal in this volume do not constitute the entire body of such records in the Dutch colonial manuscripts. As stated above, additional ordinances or copies of ordinances also appear at the end of some volumes and in others they are incorporated within the minutes of a council session. Until all the volumes of Dutch records have been translated or republished in the *New Netherland Documents* series, O’Callaghan’s *Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland* will have to be consulted for those ordinances appearing elsewhere.
Foreword

Perhaps it was that the big prize was always Brazil and that mercantilist economic practice precluded great effort by the Dutch to settle their vast North American colony of New Netherland. The golden fluorescence of Dutch economy and culture in the seventeenth-century militated against massive out-migrations of Dutch opportunity seekers settling on the frontiers of western civilization. These and other factors combined to keep Dutch possessions in North America sparsely settled, even though a rather heterogeneous population, recruited from much of Northern Europe, eventually came to live here. Despite this sparse population diluted by other national strains, Dutch language and culture were dominant during the period of Dutch colonial proprietorship and for long thereafter. The Dutch established an enduring cultural hegemony, traces of which are discernible in place names, remaining architecture, in words surviving in our vernacular, and in historical documents they left behind them.

The northern center of Dutch culture, a conservative community in which Dutch custom would particularly endure in one form or another, was Albany, then, variously and reflecting the political and military realities of the seventeenth century, named Fort Orange, Fuyck, Beverwijck, Albany, Willemstadt, and Albany again, last and finally. This community, fortified fur-trading post, hamlet, and village under Dutch government, and its eventual satellite communities, existed surrounded by the vast domain of Rensselaerswijck, patroonship of the Van Rensselaer family.

Albany and its Dutch progenitor are well documented, with public records dating from the mid-seventeenth century to the present, the minutiae of administration small brush strokes on the canvas of the municipal history. It is in these public records, created for the most mundane purposes and in the most routine way, that a most candid portrait of the people can be found. In the court minutes of Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck are unringed and feral hogs rooting in kitchen gardens, cobblers in tavern brawls, petty litigations over bundles of firewood, attempts to regulate life and prop-
erty, dispense justice, and administer a crude frontier community isolated by thousands of miles of ocean and a considerably different reality from its mother country.

The records, in their laconic and pedestrian way, are revealing of the inhabitants of Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck, often offering the sole proof that some of them existed. Warts and all, our literal and figurative ancestors, the founders of primordial Albany, are there, in their diligence, tenacity, ambition, and courage, their avarice, cowardice, or sloth. In seventeenth-century Dutch in seventeenth-century calligraphy, on a relatively few brittle pages, the records of this remote past repose in a vault in the Albany County Hall of Records. Now, in this new translation, these documents are made more accessible to all of us, and through them in a small way, we can come to know, in a small way, the Fort Orange and Beverwijck of muddy streets and chimney fires, of scoldings, grudges, bakeries, taverns, Indian trade, and contraband. The people of that remote time, so much like us and so different, breathe again.

Robert W. Arnold
Executive Director,
Albany County Hall of Records
Albany County Historian
November 1988
Introduction

The Dutch West India Company

The history of Dutch interest in North America properly begins with the explorations of Henry Hudson in 1609. However, it was not until the formation of the West India Company [WIC] in 1621 that the particular interests of private traders or trading concerns were phased out in favor of a government-sponsored trade monopoly supported by colonization. Although the geographical expanse of New Netherland was immense, running from the Connecticut River to the mouth of Delaware Bay, it was but a small part of the West India Company’s holdings in the Atlantic region. Brazil and Africa occupied most of the company’s attention and consumed most of its human and material resources. From the very beginning traders were attracted to New Netherland because of its abundance of fur-bearing animals; the company would also consider its peltries the primary means of justifying the colony’s existence.¹

The original plan of the West India Company directors was to exploit the region of New Netherland as efficiently as possible by establishing strategically located trading posts along its three navigable rivers in the proximity of the natives who would trade furs for manufactured goods. In 1624 a group of Walloon refugees were transported to New Netherland for the purpose of forming agricultural-support communities for the company’s trading posts on the Hudson, Delaware, and Connecticut rivers. These satellite trading posts were to funnel the peltries to a central point (initially Governors Island) to await shipment to the Netherlands. However, within two years such outlying areas had become so unstable because of problems with the natives that all support personnel were resettled on the newly purchased island of Manhattan. Only traders and soldiers of the company remained behind to maintain possession of the trade routes.

Of these three trading posts only Fort Orange on the upper Hudson River maintained a continuity of operation throughout the period of Dutch administration. The post at the mouth of the Connecticut River was later

moved upriver and named Fort Goede Hoop (present-day Hartford). Because it was located in an area attracting numerous New England settlers, it eventually became more English than Dutch. In an attempt to establish firm boundaries with the New England colonies at the 1650 conference at Hartford, Petrus Stuyvesant ceded the entire region to Connecticut. The post in the Delaware region on Burlington Island was abandoned completely when the Walloons were removed to Manhattan. However, the West India Company was able to protect its Delaware trade route with the construction of Fort Nassau (present-day Gloucester, N.J.) in 1626. For some years it was enough to maintain a seasonal presence in the region until the appearance of foreign competition made it necessary to strengthen their position. In 1638, when the Swedish South River Company established trading posts on the opposite bank of the river in order to intercept Indians bringing peltries from the west, Fort Nassau became an anachronism. Stuyvesant solved this problem in 1651 by dismantling the fort and establishing a new one south of the main Swedish fort. This new stronghold and trading post, named Fort Casimir, was not only on the proper side of the river for trading purposes but also was in a position to interrupt Swedish access to the sea. The Swedes countered this threat by capturing the Dutch fort three years later. In the fall of 1655 Stuyvesant eliminated both the tension and the competition in the Delaware by conquering New Sweden. However, Fort Casimir (later renamed Fort New Amstel) never attained the primacy of Fort Orange as a fur-trading operation.²

A glance at a map of the Northeast clearly shows that the unique configuration of the Hudson and Mohawk valleys offers the most efficient access to the interior of North America south of the Saint Lawrence River. To the Dutch these two river valleys represented a conduit for the trans-shipment of peltry to Europe. A trading post near the confluence of the Mohawk and Hudson would serve as a collection point for furs brought in from the west and as a storehouse of goods to trade with the Indians. In 1614 a group of Dutch trading concerns, licensed by the States General as the New Netherland Company, constructed Fort Nassau on Castle Island in the Hudson River (presently part of the port of Albany).

The fort’s interior dimensions were 58 feet by 58 feet, surrounded by earthen breastworks and a dry moat 18 feet wide. Inside the fort was a trad-

ing house 36 feet long by 26 feet wide. Unfortunately its location in the riv-
er left it to the mercy of the elements; after suffering severe damage from
spring floods and ice floes, the trading post was abandoned in 1618. Until
the appearance of the West India Company the region was frequented dur-
ing the trading season by private merchants who lived aboard their ships
or in makeshift shelters on shore. In 1624, after some problems in securing
financial backing, the WIC established its claim to the region with the con-
struction of Fort Orange and the settlement of eighteen families.

At the time of Dutch settlement both sides of the upper Hudson Val-
ley were controlled by Algonquin Indians called Mahikanders [Mahican] by
the Dutch. Just to the west of Fort Orange were the Maquas [Mohawk], the
easternmost tribe of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Mahican were the right-
ful owners of the area around the fort; however, the Mohawk were situated
along the trade route to the interior and in a position to control the flow of
peltries to the Dutch. Since at this time the West India Company did not
consider land a commodity worth possessing, but rather a means for gain-
ing access to products profitable to its investors, one would have expected an
alliance with the Mohawk in order to secure the major trade route. Instead,
Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, first commander of Fort Orange, decided to as-
sist the Mahican in an attack on the Mohawk. The instructions to Willem
Verhulst, director of New Netherland, expressly prohibited involvement in
local Indian disputes. The territorial struggle between the Mahican and the
Mohawk had been going on for decades but probably intensified with the
presence of the Dutch and the advantage of their friendship. A war origi-
nally more related to dominance over hunting grounds thus developed into
a struggle for control of the fur trade.

In the spring of 1626 Van Crieckenbeeck and six of his soldiers marched
off with a Mahican war party for an attack on the Mohawk. Approximately
five miles from Fort Orange the expedition was ambushed by a Mohawk war
party (probably in the Norman’s Kill ravine south of Albany). The defeat of
the Mahican and the deaths of Van Crieckenbeeck and four of his soldiers
sent shock waves throughout New Netherland. Peter Minuit, who had re-
placed Verhulst as director, immediately assessed the situation and decided
to withdraw the settlers for their own safety. Although relations with the
Mohawk were patched up and the trade route reestablished, the settlers were

3 These dimensions were taken from the “1615 Figurative Map of New Netherland” at
the Royal Archives in The Hague.
4 Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624–1626, in the Henry E. Huntington
Library, translated and edited by A.J.F. van Laer (San Marino, 1924) 36–129.
not returned to the area; only a small garrison was maintained at the fort for protection of the West India Company’s trading interests. By 1629 the Mohawk had consolidated their victory over the Mahican by driving them to the east side of the Hudson River. The Mohawk not only now controlled the fur-trade route from the west but also had eliminated all competition in their dealings with the Dutch. The expulsion of the Mahican from the area left a vacuum around Fort Orange, which the Dutch proceeded to fill in a unique way.

The Patroonship of Rensselaerswijck

From the very inception of the West India Company there arose a debate over whether the overseas territories should only be considered sites for trading posts concerned with exploiting the natural resources from the region or open to colonists who would commit themselves to developing the region agriculturally. One faction suspected that the colonists would be a drain on the company’s profits through illegal competition and smuggling, while the other faction explained that an agricultural base was necessary to maintain the trading routes and discourage settlement by other foreign powers. In 1629 the faction favoring colonization won a concession called the “Freedoms and Exemptions.” Under its terms a “patroon” was allowed to negotiate with the natives for a tract of land upon which he was obligated to settle 50 colonists within four years at his own expense. The patroon was granted the rights of high, middle, and low jurisdictions and held the land as a perpetual fief of inheritance with the right to dispose of the colony by last will and testament. In effect the question of colonization was turned over to the private sector. All the investors who filed for the right to become land barons in the New World were either directors of the West India Company or closely involved with its operations. Only one succeeded to the point of passing his domain on to his heirs, and its success could be attributed in part to “insider” information.

Early enthusiasm for the patroonship plan of colonization found numerous investors willing to risk their capital on land from Delaware Bay to the Connecticut River. However, only Rensselaerswijck located along the upper Hudson managed to survive. Although its success derived partly from superior location, most of the credit is due to the imagination and patience of its major investor. Kiliaen van Rensselaer was a director of the West India Com-

5 VRBM, 136–53.
pany, diamond merchant by vocation and agriculturalist by avocation. His experience in land reclamation in Het Gooi⁶ and management of agricultural production procedures was applied to the New World by proxy. In long detailed letters to his managers of Rensselaerswijk he expressed his concern for every phase of agricultural development and production. Kiliaen van Rensselaer’s determination and vision may have been enough to bring success to a plan that failed elsewhere; however, when he died in 1643 at the age of sixty-three, only ten years after the settlement of his colony, the fate of Rensselaerswijk fell into the hands of people unable to prevent friction with the West India Company at Fort Orange. The premature death of such a dynamic leader probably would have signaled the end of any other comparable venture; however, Rensselaerswijk’s location at the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers with a West India Company fort and trading post in its geographical center, its fertile farmland and its abundant natural resources were assets that could overcome much adversity. If it is true that location is everything in the world of real estate, then Kiliaen van Rensselaer was well served by his agent.

Bastiaen Jansz Krol came to Kiliaen van Rensselaer with impressive credentials. Not only had he served the West India Company in New Netherland from its earliest attempts at settlement but he had been appointed commissary of Fort Orange several months after the Crieckenbeeck disaster in 1626. When Krol returned to the Netherlands in 1629 he was able to advise Kiliaen van Rensselaer on potential locations for his patroonship from knowledge based on awareness of the political situation as well as agricultural suitability.⁷ The following year Krol returned to New Netherland with instructions from Van Rensselaer to purchase from the rightful native owners as much land above and below Fort Orange as the situation would allow. By May 1631 he had concluded negotiations with the Mahican for a large tract of land north and south of the company’s fort on the upper Hudson. Bastiaen Jansz Krol, in his capacity as commissary of Fort Orange, signed the purchase agreement on behalf of the patroon, Kiliaen van Rensselaer. However, what had begun as a cooperative venture between an official of the West India Company and the patron of Rensselaerswijk soon deteriorated into a period of tension and confrontation between these two forces. Although the resolution of the dispute was a crippling blow to the patronship, it was the genesis of the West India Company’s village of Beverwijck, precursor of

⁶ a district in the province of Utrecht along the IJsselmeer
During the early years the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck and the West India Company’s trading operation at Fort Orange coexisted with few problems. Kiliaen van Rensselaer sent over farmers, craftsmen, livestock, agricultural equipment, and a steady stream of detailed instructions to his managers. No matter was too small for his scrutiny, from the gelding of horses to the design of a church. However, he was well aware that Rensselaerswijck could not survive unless good relations were maintained and promoted with the company. When he learned of an incident involving the lowering of the patroon’s flag by Fort Orange officials, he wrote to Willem Kieft, director of New Netherland, that the success of his colony depended in large part on good relations with the company and that he would never knowingly do anything to usurp its power or revenue; “if my people speak foolish words, it is by reason of their weakness and not by my orders.”

It was not Kiliaen van Rensselaer’s intention to compete with the company but rather to cooperate for their mutual benefit. As a director of the West India Company in the Amsterdam chamber and a leading force behind the patroonship plan of colonization, he was obligated to honor the articles of the “Freedoms and Exemptions” and the company’s privileges in the region. His plan was to locate the central community of the patroonship on the east side of the Hudson directly opposite the company’s fort. With the river separating Fort Orange and the patroon’s community there would be no interference with the trading post and no temptation to become involved in the fur trade. In 1639 he instructed his director of Rensselaerswijck to build the church on the east side, although there are indications that some wanted the community on the west side near the fort. He also suggested that the “mechanics” that is, carpenters, wheelwrights, coopers, smiths, and so forth, locate near the church but hastened to add that he could not order them to do so because they were freemen.

However, four years later, Isaac Jogues, a Jesuit priest hiding out in the colony from his Mohawk captors, wrote that the domine was still performing services in his house and that there were 25 to 30 houses built along the river “as each found most convenient.” If the church was under construction, the Jesuit was either unaware of it or neglected to state it; unfortunately, he also neglected to indicate along what side of the river the houses were built. These observations were made in the same year of Kiliaen van Rensselaer’s death in October 1643.

8 VRBM, 474.
9 VRBM, 454–455.
If the first patroon had lived another decade, he might have been able to carry out his plans to consolidate the major settlement on the east side of the river; however, even his wishes might have been overruled because of two factors that made settlement on the west side near Fort Orange the logical choice. First, in 1639 the West India Company revised the “Freedoms and Exemptions” of 1629, opening the fur trade to everyone, with the sole provision that the furs be transported on company ships and that a recognition fee be paid to the company. Secondly, a series of wars between the company and the River Indians south of Rensselaerswijck had brought about a sense of insecurity among the settlers. Both factors contributed to settlement on the west side of the Hudson: proximity to the fur trade, which flowed in from the west out of the Mohawk Valley and proximity to Fort Orange in the event of an Indian attack. These pressures to consolidate settlers near the fort coincided with the entrance of two new personalities into New Netherland.

The Founding of Beverwijck

The new director of Rensselaerswijck was Brant van Slichtenhorst who, in several offices in the Netherlands, had shown himself to be a single-minded individual for whom there was no room for compromise. For him, justice was immutable and he was willing to fight to the finish over the most minor points. His future adversary on Manhattan, Petrus Stuyvesant, director general of New Netherland, was a man from the same mold. He was 22 years younger than Slichtenhorst, but just as stubborn and uncompromising. In fact, Stuyvesant was so strict in upholding the rights and privileges of the West India Company that the directors were forced to caution him several times against being inflexible.

Soon after his arrival in the colony as director of Rensselaerswijck on 22 March 1648, Slichtenhorst began to grant building lots in the area north of Fort Orange. As an indication of his intention to reverse the trend of unsystematic construction along the river and to consolidate his non-agricultural employees near the security of the fort, he frequently referred to this settlement as the Bijeenwoningh, “the living-together” or “community.” It is not known whether he was acting on his own initiative in this matter, because his instructions as director have not survived. However, what probably seemed to Slichtenhorst to be a move toward the mutual security of the Rensselaer-

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swijck settlers and the company’s fort, developed into a controversy that took thirty-five years to resolve.

When Stuyvesant heard of the construction of houses near Fort Orange in the summer of 1648, he reacted swiftly. He ordered Slichtenhorst to refrain from all construction within a cannon shot of the fort (about 3,000 feet).\(^\text{12}\) As a military man, Stuyvesant was concerned about the security of the fort and was determined to reestablish the company’s presence in the area. There are indications that under Stuyvesant’s predecessor, Willem Kieft, only a token force was maintained at Fort Orange. It seems that Kieft was willing to allow the officials at Rensselaerswijck to administer the area with little interference from the company. For example, when the fort’s commissary, Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert, fled into the Mohawk country in 1647 to avoid prosecution, it was Hans Vos, an employee of Rensselaerswijck, who was sent after him.\(^\text{13}\)

However, it was not only the construction of houses within Fort Orange’s field of fire that disturbed Stuyvesant, he was apparently more upset that Slichtenhorst had refused to allow the Company laborers to quarry stone and cut timber on the patroon’s land without permission; he even prohibited his colonists from using the patroon’s horses to haul construction materials to the fort. Stone and timber were urgently needed to repair the fort that had been severely damaged by flooding during the previous winter. To Stuyvesant this was usurpation of the company’s authority and supreme jurisdiction in New Netherland.\(^\text{14}\) He reasoned that if this was tolerated, then other “colonies” such as Flushing and Gravesend on Long Island would expect the same, depriving the company of timber needed for ships, forts, and other constructions; eventually the company would have to beg the materials from their subjects and even pay for them at the highest price. Stuyvesant was not prepared to allow the company to be degraded in this manner. Conversely, Slichtenhorst considered the patroon’s authority to be supreme in the area, which he maintained also included the ground upon which Fort Orange stood. Thus the stage was set for the confrontation of two uncompromising wills.

Although Stuyvesant reacted quickly to the situation in the north, the distance between Fort Orange and Manhattan (about 150 miles) did not allow for the quick execution of his orders. In fact, during the winter months (usually from November to mid-April) the Hudson was frozen, isolating Fort

\(^{12}\) NYHM, 5:18.
\(^{13}\) MCR, 105.
\(^{14}\) NYHM, 5: 2–3.
Orange completely from the rest of New Netherland. Stuyvesant could also expect to wait six months or more for instructions from his superiors in the Netherlands. Because of this isolation, local directors and commanders were left on their own initiative for long periods of time; sometimes following courses of action that were diametrically opposed to the wishes of the company’s directors. In addition to these problems of communication, Stuyvesant was at this time preoccupied with negotiating a boundary with the English colonies to the east and confronting a Swedish colony in his southern jurisdiction.

We no longer have the advantage of Stuyvesant’s letters to the directors of the company in Amsterdam, however, they must have contained detailed information concerning Slichtenhorst’s activities at Rensselaerswijck, because every letter from the directors to Stuyvesant for the period 1648 through 1652 contains at least one paragraph focusing on the patroonship. There can be no doubt that Stuyvesant was being careful to advise the directors about the situation and waiting for their instructions before acting. He was aware that he was dealing with powerful forces in the Netherlands. Although Killiaen van Rensselaer was dead, the patroonship still had many friends within the company who would be sympathetic to its interests. In the meantime, Slichtenhorst proceeded with his plans to consolidate his non-agricultural colonists in the Bijeenwoningh or Fuyck, as it was called well into the eighteenth century. He continued to defy Stuyvesant’s prohibition against constructions within 3000 feet of the fort by granting new building lots; in fact, he went so far as to distribute lots in fee simple and guaranteed his settlers against loss if their buildings were damaged or torn down by the company. During this period, from 1648 to 1651, while Stuyvesant was settling other matters and waiting for instructions, Slichtenhorst asserted himself in other ways: first, by refusing to allow company ordinances to be posted within the limits of Rensselaerswijck; and then by threatening to fine any of his farmers who hauled stone or wood for the repair of the fort. By 1651 Stuyvesant was ready to move against Slichtenhorst: the Treaty of Hartford had been concluded with New England, ostensibly securing the eastern boundaries of New Netherland; and Fort Casimir had been erected on the Delaware to guard against further encroachments by the Swedes. Now that his external

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15 This name is derived from the Dutch word for a fishnet in the shape of a truncated cone, usually called a “hoopnet.” The name Fuyck was applied to the early settlement because of the two roads that emanated from the fort, one along the shoreline and the other inland (now Broadway). Viewed from the north wall of Fort Orange these diverging roads would have resembled the basic shape of a hoopnet.
problems had been resolved for the moment, he was ready to turn his attention to his major internal problem—Rensselaerswijck.

Stuyvesant had received instructions from the directors to proceed firmly against Slichtenhorst; in essence, giving him a mandate to uphold the sovereignty of the fort including the area of 3,000 feet from its perimeter. The directors had made this decision on the basis of discussions with the owners of Rensselaerswijck in the Netherlands. They had concluded that Slichtenhorst had fallen from favor and would soon be replaced. There is no doubt that his uncompromising behavior had dissatisfied the owners. As Kiliaen van Rensselaer had stated earlier to Willem Kieft, his colony could not survive without maintaining good relations with the company. Although it cannot be proven, there is the possibility that the owners would have been content to let the company initiate the removal of Slichtenhorst, since he claimed that Rensselaerswijck owed him more than £15,000 and probably would not have responded to any recall until his accounts were settled.16

When Slichtenhorst tore down a company ordinance in 1651 concerning excise taxes, Stuyvesant made his final move. He summoned the director of Rensselaerswijck to Manhattan to explain his actions, and incredibly Slichtenhorst went; probably not as much out of obedience to the director general of New Netherland, as out of a desire to discuss the question with Stuyvesant as an equal. Slichtenhorst’s confidence had grown from a false sense of security bred by continued success in defying the company. When he arrived in New Amsterdam, he was promptly thrown in jail.17 The plan may have been to transport him on the first available ship to the Netherlands where the company and owners of Rensselaerswijck would resolve the matter. Slichtenhorst, however, had other plans. He escaped from jail and made his way back to Rensselaerswijck. His experience in New Amsterdam, if anything, made him more determined than ever to maintain the privileges of the patroonship and to carry out his settlement plans.

During 1651, with rumors of war with England in the air, Slichtenhorst proceeded to grant new building lots within the disputed area around the fort and continued to refuse the posting of company ordinances. Slichtenhorst had been in similar situations in the Netherlands and had reacted in the same manner.18 In pursuit of justice he would oppose any authority for any length of time. When Johannes Dijckman, the commissary of Fort Orange, requested that some company ordinances be posted in Rensselaerswi-

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16 The WIC directors to Stuyvesant in NYCD, 14:171.
17 NYCD, 14:187.
18 MCR, 184.
jck, Slichtenhorst responded, “In no way, as long as I have a drop of blood in my body, unless you first show me authorization from our [superiors in the Netherlands].” However, his days were now numbered.

On New Year’s eve, during the usual celebration, soldiers from the fort fired burning fuses onto the roof of the director’s house just north of the fort. The thatch was set afire but quickly extinguished and Slichtenhorst’s family escaped without injury. On New Year’s day of 1652, Slichtenhorst’s son Gerrit, was assaulted by the same soldiers near the fort. They beat him “black and blue” and then dragged him through the mud. Dijckman watched the activity, apparently with amusement, for he threatened to run anyone through with his sword who interfered. When told that Slichtenhorst would avenge the treatment of his son, Dijckman ordered his gunner to load the fort’s cannon and prepare to fire through the director’s house. The situation had become intolerable. If the success of Rensselaerswijk depended on maintaining good relations with the company, then this state of open hostility would lead quickly to its total failure.

As soon as the river opened in the spring of 1652 Stuyvesant made his final move. He had an ordinance passed in council proclaiming the company’s jurisdiction around the fort and ordered the erection of boundary posts. As was probably predicted, Slichtenhorst refused to publish the ordinance and tore down the boundary markers. Dijckman responded by visiting the director with eight armed soldiers. He hauled down the patroon’s flag, rang the bell, and proclaimed the establishment of the court of Fort Orange and village of Beverwijck. Slichtenhorst was arrested and sent to Manhattan where he spent the next sixteen months under detention, during which time his term of office expired. The residents of Fuyck who fell within the 3,000-foot jurisdiction around the fort were ordered to swear allegiance to the company, absolving them of any obligations to the patroonship. In one stroke Rensselaerswijk had lost its major community where most of the non-agricultural colonists had built houses and pursued their various trades, and a new political entity had been created, which would eventually become the capitol of the Empire State.

Protests in the Netherlands were in vain, until 1674 when the West India Company decided that the patroon was indeed the legal owner of the disputed land. However, the owners of Rensselaerswijk were referred to the king of England for restitution of their rights, because the province had just been returned to England by an article in the Treaty of Westminster ending

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19 MCR, 188.
20 MCR, 189.
the Third Anglo-Dutch War.\textsuperscript{21}

The Court of Fort Orange and Beverwijck

The newly created court, which was termed a \textit{Kleine Banck van Justitie}, an inferior bench of judicature, was a court for the trial of civil and minor criminal cases, from which an appeal lay to the director general and council of New Netherland. The court was composed of the \textit{commies}, or commissary of the fort, afterwards bearing the title of vice director, and variable numbers of commissarissen, or local magistrates, often designated in English documents of the period as “commissaries.” Of these the commies, who acted as prosecuting officer and who represented the company, was appointed for an indefinite term of years directly by the director general and council of New Netherland, while the magistrates, at least in theory, represented the people and were appointed annually from a double number chosen by the inhabitants. When sitting as a criminal court, the officer presided and demanded justice of the magistrates, who not only found whether the accused was guilty, but also determined the penalty that should be imposed on him.

The jurisdiction of the court comprised Fort Orange, the village of Beverwijck, Schenectady, Kinderhook, Claverack, Coxsackie, Catskill and, until May 16, 1661, when a court was established at the Esopus. Excluded from the jurisdiction was the colony of Rensselaerswijck, which maintained its own court, side by side with that of Fort Orange and the village of Beverwijck until 1665, when by order of Governor Richard Nicolls the two courts were consolidated. A record of the court of Rensselaerswijck for the period 1648–52, when it was presided over by Van Slichtenhorst, has been preserved, but no record exists of judicial proceedings after the last mentioned date. Considering that the majority of the tenants of the patroon had becomeburghers of Beverwijck and had their cases tried before the local court, it is fair to assume that the court of the colony of Rensselaerswijck was rarely, if ever, called upon to exercise its judicial functions after 1652, and that there-

\textsuperscript{21} NYCD, 2:558.
\textsuperscript{22} Minutes of the Court of Fort Orange and Beverwyck, translated and edited by A.J.F. van Laer, 2 vols. (Albany, 1920–1923).
fore no record was kept.23

As an illustration of the primitive conditions under which the court of Fort Orange and Beverwijck conducted its sessions, it is interesting to read the description of the first two buildings that were occupied by the court. This description has been preserved in a memorandum which was presented by Vice Director La Montagne to the director general and council of New Netherland on September 4, 1660,24 in justification of the expenditures incurred by him in building the second court house in 1657–58. The description of the original building is as follows:

The old house was 26 feet and 9 inches Rhineland measure in length and two stories high, built all around of one-inch boards and having a pavilion-shaped roof, covered with old shingles, as said before. Underneath was a cellar, 19 feet wide and as long as the width of the house. The first story had eight beams, resting on corbels, and was divided in two by a pine partition; at the north end was a room, 16 or 17 feet in width, and at the south end a vestibule, 10 feet wide. The second story consisted of a single room used by the court, without ceiling or chimney, and to reach this room one had to climb a straight flight of stairs through a trap door.

The old building, which stood close to the fort, on the present steamboat square,25 had by 1657 sagged at the north end in such a way as to crush almost completely the house of Lambert van Valckenburgh and its general condition was so dilapidated that repairs seemed useless. It was therefore torn down to make room for a larger brick building, which in the above-mentioned memorandum is described as follows:

A brick building was built, with two cellars, each 21 feet square, separated by a two-brick wall. The foundation of the said cellar is 3 or 4 feet in thickness, built of substantial stone (hauled a distance of 16 miles), 6 feet high, to the level of the ground, and on top of this is a brick wall, two feet high and three bricks thick, upon which rest the cellar beams. The first story is divided into three parts: at the north end is a room 21 feet square, inside measure, with a brick chimney; at the south end a kitchen 16 feet in width

23 Contrary to Van Laer’s assumption, much evidence has been found to demonstrate that the court of Rensselaerswijck remained active after the formation of Beverwijck; however, no original minutes have survived.
24 The whereabouts of this memorandum is unknown.
25 Van Laer was mistaken in the location of the old building; according to all evidence, both internal and external, the building housing the court and the house of Lambert van Valckenburgh was inside Fort Orange at this period of time.
and 21 feet in length, also with a chimney and a hallway 5 feet wide, separated from the large room by a one-brick wall. The upper story is divided by a half-brick wall into two equal parts, each 21 feet square. At the north end is a room, intended for the court; at the other end an office, in which are a wainscoted bedstead and a chimney. Access to this floor is by a winding stairway and a separate landing. On this landing there are three doors, one to the left, which gives access to the court room; another toward the front, which gives access to the attic by means of a winding staircase. This attic extends over the whole house and above it there is a loft, suitable for the storage of powder and other ammunition. In short, it is strong and substantial house, the walls below and above (upon which the beams rest without corbels) being one and a half bricks thick, and built of choice clinker brick. The house is covered with well-burned tiles and in every one’s opinion makes a strong, commodious and handsome structure.

The records of the court, which under different names continued to exist until the erection of the mayor’s court of the city of Albany in 1686, have for the greater part been carefully preserved. They consist of eight books of minutes, all written in the Dutch language, of which six, containing the minutes for 1652–56, 1658–59, 1668–73, 1675–84, 1676–80, and 1680–85, are kept in the Albany county clerk’s office, and the remaining two volumes, containing the minutes for 1657 and 1660, form part of volume 16 of the New York Colonial Manuscripts in the New York State Library.

A complete calendar of the minutes, with exception of those for 1657 and 1660, which are listed in the Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, edited by E. B. O’Callaghan, was prepared by Berthold Fernow in 1894–95, under the direction of Wheeler B. Melius, in connection with publication of the printed Index to the Albany county records, of which Mr. Melius was the superintendent. A copy of this calendar, with editorial and genealogical notes by C. A. Hollenbeck, who used the pseudonym “Jed,” appeared under the heading “Historical Fragments” in the Sunday issues of the Albany Argus for October 18, 1903–April 23, 1905.

Translations of the minutes for 1658–59, which are entered in a record entitled Mortgage[s] No. 1, 1652–1660, were included among the manuscripts of the late Professor Jonathan Pearson, which were recently placed at the disposal of the New York State Library by the author’s sons and which, with the exception of these minutes, were published under the title of Early Records of the City and County of Albany and Colony of Rensselaerswijck, but, as far as known, no full translation of the entire series of minutes has

26 These records are now held by the Albany County Hall of Records.
ever been made.

That the oldest judicial and administrative records of the city and county of Albany should thus, for a period of more than two hundred years, have remained virtually a sealed book, is much to be regretted. It is surprising in view of the fact that as early as December 31, 1768, an act was passed providing for the translation of the Dutch records in the custody of the clerk of the city and county of Albany. The bill, which was introduced in the General Assembly by Col. Philip Schuyler, referred to a committee and favorably reported by Abraham Ten Broeck, makes no mention of any court records and was apparently primarily intended to provide for the preservation and translation of deeds and other writings which as the act says “greatly concern the Estates and property of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the said County, and in their present Condition are in danger of being lost.” As another section of the act, however, refers to the turning over to the translator by the clerk of “all the Dutch Records and Writings remaining in his custody, it may be assumed that the court records were meant to be included. Whatever may have been the intention of the introducer of the bill, there is no evidence to show that any such translations as were contemplated by the act were ever made.

The first book of minutes, of which a translation appears in the present volume, is a folio volume of 321 pages, which contain the proceedings of the court from April 15, 1652, to December 12, 1656. The handwriting in the book varies, the first part apparently that of Joannes Dijckman, who was commissary of Fort Orange from 1651 until June 1655, when he was incapacitated by insanity. During the administration of Joannes Dijckman, Pieter Ryverdingh was court messenger and for some time also clerk, and it is possible that some of the entries are in his handwriting.

Johan de Deckere, who succeeded Dijckman, was appointed presiding commissary at Fort Orange on June 21, 1655, and the minutes from July 13th of that year until July 17, 1656, were kept by him. Johannes de La Montagne, who offered to go to Fort Orange on August 22, 1656, was appointed the same day and received his commission as vice director on September 22nd of that year. The first entry signed by him occurs under the date of October 13, 1656, and appears to be in the handwriting of Johannes Provoost, who during the administration of La Montagne was the clerk of the court. The court messenger at that time was Ludovicus Cobus, who received his appointment on August 7, 1656. For the period from October 4 to December 12, 1656, an engrossed copy of the minutes is found in part 2 of volume 16 of the New York Colonial Manuscripts, in the New York State Archives, of
which use has been made to supply the signatures to the entry of October 4, 1656, which are cut out of the original record, presumably for the sake of securing the autograph of Peter Stuyvesant, who on that date presided over the court.

The minutes for 1658–1659 make up the first 211 pages of an original record in the Albany county clerk’s office which on the back is lettered: Court Minutes 2, 1658–1660, and underneath, in larger type, Mortgage No. 1, 1652–1660. A translation of these minutes, made by Professor Pearson, was among the manuscripts which in 1914 were presented to the New York State Library by his sons. With the exception of these minutes, these manuscripts have since been published under the title of Early Records of the City and County of Albany and Colony of Rensselaerswyck, volumes 2–4.27

The court minutes for the years 1661 until the English takeover in 1664 are missing, as are the minutes for the first four years of the English administration. It is presumed that these several record books were lost sometime before the nineteenth century, in that there is no reference to their existence in early secondary sources.

**Editorial Method**

The translation of a series of records such as the Fort Orange Court Minutes involves special problems and considerations. As with any seventeenth-century text the problems are manifold. Beginning with the decipherment of the various handwriting styles and ending with the actual balancing of equivalent expression against literal meaning. The major problem in these minutes is embodied in the person of Johannes Dijckman, the first chief magistrate of the court and keeper of the minutes. His handwriting was so bad that the directors in Amsterdam once complained to Stuyvesant about their inability to read records sent to them for the year 1651. Stuyvesant explained that they were the product of the “drunkard Johannes Dijckmans.”28

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27 This concludes the excerpts from A. J. F. van Laer’s prefaces to his two-volume translation of the Court Minutes of Fort Orange and Beverwijck.
28 Letter from Stuyvesant to the directors in Amsterdam, dated October 30, 1655, in the “Bontemantel Collection” at the New York Public Library, According to The Register of New Netherland, compiled by E. B. O’Callaghan (Albany, 1865), 25–26, Dijckman arrived in New Netherland in the spring of 1651 where he was employed as bookkeeper or commissary of accounts on Manhattan before becoming commissary of Fort Orange later in the same year.
His handwriting in the Fort Orange Court Minutes reflects this disability, which intensifies over the years until he ceases keeping the minutes almost in mid stroke and is replaced by a more benign hand. However, from April 10, 1652, until May 9, 1655, we are confronted with a hand in some cases so unclear that only context and related documents make a translation possible. Although a translation conceals or smooths out the writer’s failings caused by physical and mental disabilities, there are other manifestations that indicate a befuddled or confused mind, such as incorrect dates on minute headings and various other errors in formatting the minutes in the book. All of these inaccuracies are duly noted in the annotations.

With regard to the actual layout or format of the minutes, the original was adhered to as much as possible. This was done both to maintain the integrity of the original document and to reflect the style of the three different hands involved in keeping the records. These different hands reveal themselves not only in the distinct way in which the records are laid out, but also in punctuation and the use of Latin expressions. Proper names are transcribed rather than translated, that is to say, they are kept exactly as they appear in the records. These variations provide the researcher with clues to pronunciation and often a connection to a later form of the name that would otherwise remain obscure. They also provide information on incipient folk etymologies and tell us something about the relative literacy of individuals. Damaged portions are indicated by empty brackets that approximate the amount of loss or by italicized explanations in brackets. Dutch weights and measures have been maintained. Equivalent values in English are given in the glossary. All Dutch and other foreign terms are italicized with an accompanying translation in the footnotes. Professional and craft names as well as nicknames and places of origins associated with individuals are kept in the Dutch to preserve a possible connection with the surname of following generations, such as the redheaded carpenter from Salsbergen, Jan Hendricksen, who appears in the records with one or more of the following appellations: Jan Hendricksen Roodthaer van Salsbergen Timmerman. The index reflects the various combinations by which a person could be identified; translations of the various craft names are listed in the glossary.

Although the present translation represents a reworking from the original manuscripts, it builds by necessity on the previous translation of A. J. F. van Laer. In some cases this translation is only a revision of his language because there are only so many ways to say “The plaintiff demands payment of the debt.” However, the present translation has been assisted and enhanced by new source materials such as the Deacons’ Account Book and the map of
Beverwijck in 1653, which was researched and developed by the New Netherland Project. It attempts to locate all the inhabitants who had houses in the community at that time. Both have clarified certain relationships in the proceedings and increased our knowledge of life in the Dutch community.
It is appropriate for several reasons that these papers relating to seventeenth century Dutch activities in the Caribbean appear at this time. First, on July 30, 1984, Curaçao celebrated the 350th anniversary of the seizure of the island from the Spaniards. Second, 1982 marked the celebration and commemoration of 200 years of peaceful relations between the United States of America and the Netherlands. It is also appropriate that this volume of *New Netherland Documents* represents a cooperative effort between an American from New York and a Netherlander who has spent 30 years of his life on Curaçao. The historical bonds between New York and Curaçao reach back to 1646 when Petrus Stuyvesant received his commission from the West India Company as director-general of New Netherland, Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba and other dependencies in the Caribbean. As New Netherland is considered a precursor of New York State government, Stuyvesant’s responsibilities in the Caribbean must also be viewed as an integral part of New York’s colonial history. Although New Netherland permanently became New York in 1674, its bonds with the fatherland and mercantile ties to the Caribbean survived for many years.

Dutch interest in the Caribbean properly begins in 1598 when Spain closed the Iberian peninsula to Dutch shipping denying the Netherlands its source of salt. Because salt was so vital for food preservation, especially in the herring industry, a new and reliable supply had to be found. After several unsuccessful attempts to establish a salt operation on Punta de Araya and St. Martin, the West India Company\(^1\) turned its attention to the Spanish-held...

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\(^1\) The West India Company was chartered on June 3, 1621 by the States General of the United Provinces for a period of 21 years. The organization of the Company coincided with the expiration of a twelve years’ truce between the Netherlands and Spain. The new company’s major objective was to carry on the war with Spain, which had begun in 1568; however, it was also given the exclusive rights to trade in the Atlantic region as well as in the Pacific as far as the eastern reaches of New Guinea. Its organization was modeled after the East India Company as a stock company with private investors supplying the operating capital. The nineteen directors (one of which was appointed by the States General) were organized into five chambers representing various regions or cities in the United Provinces. The majority interest, however, was shared by Amsterdam and Zeeland with eight and six directors respectively. The West India Company’s charter was extended once until 1674 at which time it was dissolved and reorganized into a new...
island of Curaçao. Three weeks after the Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company introduced plans for seizing the island, an expedition of six ships and 225 soldiers led by Joannes van Walbeeck and Pierre le Grand\(^2\) set out for the Caribbean. On the 28th of July 1634 the Dutch force sailed unopposed into St. Anna Bay. Several days of verbal sparring with the Spanish governor of Curaçao ended on the 30th of July when Van Walbeeck made his intentions clear by landing his troops. The island was soon brought under Dutch control. Although the Spaniards immediately began to plan for the recovery of Curaçao, no serious threat to this Dutch presence forty miles from Venezuela ever materialized.

In 1635 the Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company was given exclusive authority over Curaçao in spite of strong objections by the representatives of the Zeeland chamber who regarded the Caribbean region within their sphere of influence. During the same year, David Adam Wiltschut replaced Pierre le Grand as military commander on Curaçao. The Dutch continued to strengthen their position on Curaçao against possible recovery attempts from Venezuela and in the following year were strong enough to increase their holdings in the area by occupying Aruba and Bonaire. In 1638 Jacob Pietersz Tolck replaced Van Walbeeck, who was transferred to Dutch Brazil.\(^3\) Under Tolck the political and military leadership were merged into one supreme command and an aggressive policy was initiated against Spanish holdings on the coasts of Venezuela and Columbia. Tolck was replaced in 1641 by Jan Claeszoon van Campen who was the former director of St. Martin before its seizure by the Spaniards in 1633. Shortly after Curaçao fell to the Dutch, Van Campen was sent to the island as an expert on salt production. As commander he continued Tolck’s policy of aggressive engagement with the Spaniards by attacking Trujillo in Lake Maracaibo; however, early in 1642 Van Campen died suddenly and was replaced by Petrus Stuyvesant who had served on Curaçao as commissary of stores since 1639.

Stuyvesant was no less aggressive than his two predecessors. After the Spaniards seized Bonaire briefly in October of 1642, he retaliated with an attack on Puerto Cabello on the coast of Venezuela. In the spring of 1644, despite near starvation conditions on the islands, Stuyvesant assembled a force strong enough to attack the Spanish fort on St. Martin. During the
opening exchange of fire between the Dutch siege cannon and the Spanish defenders, Stuyvesant was struck in the right leg by a shot and had to be removed from action. The loss of Stuyvesant’s leadership and the inability to keep the defenders from being resupplied from Puerto Rico forced the Dutch to lift the siege after four weeks and return to Curaçao. During the first week of April, while Stuyvesant was laying siege to the fort on St. Martin, approximately 450 West India Company personnel fled to Curaçao from the Maranhão region of Brazil. This exodus was prompted by the fall of São Luis, the major city in the Maranhão, on the 28th of February. Most of the men in this contingent were soldiers under the command of David Adam Wiltschut, the former military commander on Curaçao. Stuyvesant must have been overwhelmed when he returned to Curaçao, minus one leg, to find 450 new mouths to feed. The islands were already short of provisions because of the expedition to St. Martin and Wiltschut had brought none with him from Brazil. Stuyvesant resolved the crisis by sending the majority of the soldiers to Willem Kieft, director of New Netherland, to assist in his campaign against the Indians. Stuyvesant’s physical problem, however, could not be so easily resolved because the tropical climate was not allowing his amputation wound to heal properly. As a result Stuyvesant’s physicians recommended that he return to the more temperate climate of the Netherlands for recovery. After appointing Lucas van Rodenburgh provisional director, Stuyvesant took his physicians’ advice and left for the Netherlands at the end of August 1644.

In 1646 Stuyvesant received a commission as director of New Netherland, Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba and their dependencies. Although it appears that Stuyvesant’s commission brought the Caribbean islands within the jurisdiction of New Netherland, they in fact retained a semi-autonomous status. The vice-director on Curaçao still reported directly to his superiors in the chamber at Amsterdam. In addition to this there are no instances in the council minutes of New Netherland where resolutions or orders are made concerning the Caribbean islands. It is possible that Stuyvesant’s commission reflected future plans for the union of New Netherland and the Caribbean which could not be implemented until a reliable communication network was established; or it may be that the colonies of New Netherland and the “Curaçao

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4 For the Spanish perspective on Stuyvesant’s St. Martin expedition see documents 121–130 in Nederlandsche zeevaarders op de eilanden in de Caraibische Zee en aan de Kust van Columbia en Venezuela gedurende de jaren 1621–1648 by Irene A. Wright and Cornelis F.A. van Dam eds. published in Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht, Werken, derde serie, No. 64 (1935).
islands” were to remain autonomous, linked only by a “personal union” as embodied in Petrus Stuyvesant.5

Rodenburgh’s long tenure as provisional director and vice-director came to an end when he was replaced in 1655 by Matthias Beck. Beck had served the West India Company in Brazil for about nineteen years. During his final five years there, he held the position of manager of the silver mines in Siara. When Brazil fell to the Portuguese in 1654 Beck apparently fled to the English held island of Barbados, where he met Stuyvesant in the following year. Beck accompanied Stuyvesant to Curaçao where he replaced Lucas van Rodenburgh as vice-director. While Stuyvesant was in Curaçao he drew up the instructions for Beck’s administration of the islands.6 Rodenburgh returned to New Netherland with the director-general where he spent his final years in retirement.

Under Stuyvesant’s direction and Beck’s capable administration, the Dutch islands off the coast of Venezuela became a major trading center in the Caribbean. Although the Spanish were forbidden to trade with the Dutch according to the 1648 treaty ending the Eighty Years’ War, an unauthorized contact was established, especially as Curaçao developed as a center for the slave trade. Clandestine arrangements for the transfer of slaves were eventually supplanted by the intervention of Genoese merchants who served as middlemen in the transport of slaves from Curaçao to various points in the Caribbean.7

A steady trade also developed between New Netherland and these Caribbean islands. In return for building materials, provisions and merchandise, New Netherland received horses from Aruba, slaves from Curaçao and salt from Bonaire. In addition to these commodities Curaçao also became a significant source of dyewood for trans-shipment to the Netherlands. However, this potentially fruitful relationship between New Netherland and the Caribbean was suddenly broken when an English fleet captured the West India Company colony in North America in September of 1664.

6 See 17:19 on page 71 for Beck’s instructions.
7 These merchants were from the Genoese trading house of Grillo and Lomelino.
The manuscripts in this volume represent E. B. O’Callaghan’s reorganization of the original Dutch record books marked “MM” and “NN”. According to an inventory of the records made in 1820, “MM” contained records of Curacao from 1643 to 1664 and records of Curacao merchants from 1655 to 1664, while “NN” contained letters from Curacao and instructions from the West India Company to Director-General Stuyvesant. By 1859 O’Callaghan had completed his task of rearranging the records chronologically and according to type. He also had each volume bound in leather and provided with a cover page and index. The guide to this reorganization of the archives of New Netherland was published in 1865 under the title of Calendar of Dutch Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State Albany, New York, 1630–1664. The papers relating to Curacao, originally books “MM” and “NN,” became volume 17 of the “Colonial Manuscripts”; internally each item was numbered from 1 to 110 and arranged chronologically.

The Curacao Papers comprise a wide variety of document types ranging from resolutions of council to bills of lading. Rather than representing the administrative papers of Curacao, these manuscripts more accurately reflect Petrus Stuyvesant’s papers relating to his interests and responsibilities in the Caribbean. The first distinct group of documents is the “Resolution Book of Curacao of 1643 and 1644,” marked “MM” and “No. 58” on the title page. This book was kept by Stuyvesant during his tenure as director of Curacao. These resolutions represent administrative decisions made as a result of consideration and consensus of Stuyvesant and his councillors from 5 January 1643 to 9 November 1644. Each resolution entered in the book is followed by original signatures, except for the resolutions from 1 January 1644 to 16 April of the same year which represent the period of time when Stuyvesant and members of his council were away from Curacao with the expedition against St. Martin. The resolutions passed while at sea or on St. Martin were later copied in the “Resolution Book” followed by the names of each person

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8 Edmund B. O’Callaghan, in his capacity as “keeper of the manuscripts” in the Office of the Secretary of the State of New York, reorganized all the Dutch record books identified by alphabetical marks, as well as numerous loose papers, into folio volumes numbered 1 through 23.

9 This inventory is printed in New York Legislative Documents, 43rd. session, 1820, No. 2 under the title “A Catalogue of the Records in the Office of the Secretary of State of New-York, on the first day of January, 1820.”
who had originally signed these council decisions. Stuyvesant would not have taken such a book with him on a military expedition; however, when he left Curaçao in the fall of 1644 to recover from his injury he did take the original with him to the Netherlands. In fact, the final resolution in the book was passed aboard the ship *De Melckmeit* off the coast of Ireland. Before Stuyvesant’s departure he was given permission by resolution of council to have his secretary, Arnout Verellen, copy the resolution book “for their own justification.” Administrative records were often taken back to the fatherland, both for inspection by West India Company officials and for the defense of controversial actions. In this case, however, Stuyvesant took the originals and left the copies behind. It is unclear why. Because of this, the originals of these early records of Curaçao have survived. When Stuyvesant arrived in New Netherland as director-general in 1647, he had with him the “Resolution Book of Curaçao,” which until the English takeover remained among his papers relating to the Caribbean. It is most likely that Stuyvesant also had Tolck’s instructions [17:1 on page 1] at this time. When Stuyvesant became director of Curaçao in 1643 he probably had these instructions copied for his own guidance and kept them in the “Resolution Book.”

The next group of manuscripts (marked “NN”) begins with a letter from Vice-Director Rodenburgh in 1654 to the directors in Amsterdam. This leaves a gap of ten years between the final entry in the “Resolution Book” and Stuyvesant’s first letter pertaining to Curaçao. Although document No. 11, concerning the granting of land to Joseph Nunes de Fonseca, carries the date 22 February 1652, it was probably copied for Stuyvesant’s information when he visited the island in 1655; or it may have been sent to him directly from Amsterdam together with a copy of the “freedoms and exemptions” for Fonseca’s patroonship. Rodenburgh’s letter probably also reached Stuyvesant in 1655. Although this letter from the vice-director of Curaçao to the directors in Amsterdam is dated 2 April 1654, it was not routed through New Netherland, but sent directly to the directors in Amsterdam. In the spring

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10 These resolutions were published in full for the first time in the *West Indisch Plakaatboek, Curaçao Aruba Bonaire*, part 1, Amsterdam 1978, edited by J.A. Schilkamp and J.Th. de Smidt.
11 See resolution dated 23 August 1644 on page 46.
12 For example, in 1654 the directors in Amsterdam report the capture of the ship *‘t Hoff van Kleef* which was carrying books of monthly wages and other papers from New Netherland as well as from Curaçao (see *NYCD*, 14:263); also, many administrative papers were lost in 1647 when the ship *De Princesse Amelia* sank off the coast of Wales while carrying former director Willem Kieft back to the Netherlands (see *NYCD*, 1:262).
13 See 17:12 on page 49 for this document.
of 1655 it was forwarded to Stuyvesant along with 37 other papers concerning the colony in North America. Among these papers were copies of two letters from the directors in Amsterdam to Rodenburgh (Nos. 15 and 16). At this period of relations between Curaçao and New Netherland it was apparently routine for the vice-director of Curaçao to report directly to Amsterdam. The directors then would forward copies of this correspondence to New Netherland along with copies of their letters intended for Curaçao. The April 2, 1654 letter from Rodenburgh to the directors of Amsterdam is of particular interest because it involves possible negligence on Stuyvesant’s part concerning the reporting of soldiers from Brazil. The directors of Amsterdam underlined the relevant section of Rodenburgh’s letter and sent it to New Netherland for explanation. This explains why an original letter to Amsterdam with Rodenburgh’s signature found its way into the Curaçao Papers. It is unclear why more correspondence between Rodenburgh and the directors in Amsterdam does not appear in the Curaçao Papers; unless it was not until the loss of Brazil in 1654 that the directors in Amsterdam felt it necessary for the director general of New Netherland to take a more direct interest in Caribbean affairs.14

When Stuyvesant made his “unauthorized” voyage to the Caribbean in 1655, his major objective was to investigate the seizure of eight Dutch ships at Barbados as a result of the implementation of the English Navigation Act.15 Stuyvesant also intended to visit Curaçao with the possible objective of strengthening communications between the two colonies. It is possible that Stuyvesant did not want to be surprised anymore by charges directly reaching the directors ears; charges based on situations which could be avoided by regular communications between him and the vice-director of Curaçao. Stuyvesant not only brought Matthias Beck from Barbados to Curaçao to

14 See 17:15 on page 61 for the recommendation of the directors of Amsterdam that communication between New Netherland and Curaçao be strengthened.
15 Stuyvesant left for the Caribbean with three ships on December 24, 1654, arriving at the English-held island of Barbados sometime in the middle of January. His negotiations to establish trade relations with Barbados were suddenly interrupted by the arrival of Admiral Penn’s fleet on January 29. Stuyvesant’s trading activities were terminated by Penn because they contravened the Navigation Act of 1651 and the Dutch ships were detained until the departure of the English squadron on March 31. The directors in Amsterdam were upset when they learned of Stuyvesant’s situation because he had not only undertaken the Caribbean mission without their permission but had also placed the plans for the invasion of New Sweden during 1655 in jeopardy. Stuyvesant finally reached Curaçao sometime in mid-spring where he stayed until June 24. He arrived back in New Netherland on the 11th of July in time to complete plans for the successful military action against the Swedes on the Delaware.
replace Lucas van Rodenburgh as vice-director, drew up Beck’s instructions, but also probably left instructions to route all correspondence to the fatherland through New Amsterdam. It is not until after Stuyvesant’s 1655 visit to Curaçao that a regular correspondence begins between New Netherland and that island. Beck writes directly to Stuyvesant about matters of mutual interest. In many cases this letter serves as a cover to Beck’s letter to the directors in Amsterdam which he leaves unsealed for Stuyvesant’s consideration and requests that it be forwarded with the director-general’s mail to patria. Before sealing Beck’s letters, Stuyvesant had them copied for future reference. Thus, these Curaçao Papers represent two distinct time periods relating to Stuyvesant’s association with the Caribbean. The first period relates to Stuyvesant’s tenure as director of Curaçao, 1643-1644. The second represents the period beginning with his visit to the Caribbean in 1655 and ending in 1665 when Stuyvesant returned to the Netherlands after the loss of New Netherland to the English. The final three letters from Volkeringh and Stuyvesant’s son Balthazar probably did not reach New Netherland until after Stuyvesant had sailed for patria. It is possible that they were kept with the Curaçao Papers to await Stuyvesant’s return two years later. It is also possible that he was never informed of them after two years’ absence. Thus they remained undelivered among the records relating to Curaçao, giving us a rare glimpse of personal correspondence relating to New Netherland and Curaçao in the 17th century.

III

Although the Curaçao Papers do not represent a complete archival record of Curaçao, Bonaire and Aruba, they are significant because they add to our knowledge of West India Company activities in the Caribbean in the 17th century. In addition to supplying detailed information about the management of affairs on Curaçao, particularly during Matthias Beck’s administration, these papers also reveal the growing commercial relationship between the islands and New Netherland. Besides the instructions to Tolck and Beck, and the important correspondence between Beck and his superiors, Petrus Stuyvesant and the directors in Amsterdam, there are many business records such as bills of lading and manifests indicating the types of commodities being sent north to New Netherland; also, one can infer what the islands lacked by the lists of supplies which Beck requested from New Netherland and the receipts for such received items. Other items of interest and impor-
tance in the *Curaçao Papers* are the extensive collection of reports, depositions etc. relating to the seizure of the Dutch slaver *St. Jan* by pirates. There is also an informative collection of papers relating to De Ruyter’s famous voyage of 1664/5 to recover losses suffered at the hands of the English Royal Africa Company. The *Curaçao Papers* are therefore an unexpected source of information when one considers that the normal repositories of outgoing and incoming mail would be at either end of the colonial/patria relationship. However, the unique association between New Netherland and the “Curaçao Islands” required the preservation of records at a third repository. Although the survival of these *Curaçao Papers* from New Netherland were precarious at times, they suffered a better fate than their counterparts in the Netherlands and on Curaçao.

As stated previously, the normal reciprocal correspondence between colony and patria created two repositories for the preservation of copies of outgoing mail and originals of incoming mail. However, these repositories proved to be less secure than the one on Manhattan; both for quite different reasons. On Curaçao, the lack of suitable quarters for its archives caused many of the early records to become food for white ants and cockroaches. The deterioration of such important archival material prompted the home government to remove all records dating before January 1, 1846, from Curaçao for storage in the Algemeen Rijks Archief in The Hague. However, the damage had already been done to the early records, so that very little has survived in the Netherlands from the early years of Dutch occupation. The correspondence and administrative papers sent by the vice-directors of Curaçao to the directors at Amsterdam did not experience a much better fate.

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16 For De Ruyter’s journal of this expedition see *De reis van Michiel Adriaanszoon De Ruyter in 1664–1665* published by P. Verhoog and L. Koelmans as volume 62 in the Linschoten-Vereeniging series, ’s-Gravenhage 1961.

17 After the administrative records of New Netherland kept in the West India Company archives at New Amsterdam were turned over to the English permanently in 1674, they managed to survive a fire during the 1741 slave revolt in New York City, storage in the hold of an English warship during the Revolution, an extensive fire at the New York State Library in 1911, and years of mistreatment and neglect. Although the Dutch records have suffered some damage in the past, these 12,000 surviving pages remain the only comprehensive corpus of source material relating to the daily operations of the West India Company colony in New Netherland.

18 By royal decrees of December 22, 1915 (Official Gazette nos. 518 and 519), July 7, 1919 (Official Gazette nos. 468 and 469), and May 12, 1930 (Official Gazette nos. 165 and 166) was ordered the transfer of all records prior to January 1, 1846 in the colonies Surinam, Curaçao and the other Dutch Antilles islands to the Netherlands, where they are stored in the Algemeen Rijksarchief (General State Archives) in The Hague.
Rather than suffering the ravages of insects, these papers suffered from the eternal human compulsion to rid itself of burdensome materials, or more directly put, to clean house. It was first reported by John R. Brodhead on his trip to the Netherlands in the 1840s, while he was searching for early records relating to New Netherland, that the records of the first West India Company were ordered destroyed by ministerial decree in 1821.\(^{19}\)

However, inventories of records surviving from the end of the 18th and early 19th centuries clearly indicate that most of the first West India Company archives had already been destroyed before this time. The papers destroyed in 1821 were all dated later than 1674 and were for the most part concerned with financial affairs. Most likely, the majority of the records of the first West India Company had already been destroyed upon the occasion of the Company’s reorganization in 1674.\(^{20}\) Whether destroyed earlier or later is, of course, a mute point, except to show that such disregard for archival records in patria surely should excuse any neglect suffered in the colonies. The loss of the early records in these two repositories gives added significance to the survival of the Curaçao Papers.

It is remarkable that as important as the Curaçao Papers are for early Caribbean history they are relatively unknown to historians of the Netherlands and the Netherlands Antilles. A notable exception is Dr. A. Eckhoff’s two volume work on the Reformed Church entitled *De Hervormde Kerk in Noord-Amerika* (1624–1664), ’s-Gravenhage, 1913. Just as remarkable is that the link to the records has existed for some time, but has remained unexploited. In G.J. van Grol’s preface to his study on land policy in the Dutch West Indies\(^{21}\) he states that he has used the records concerning Curaçao in photostat copy made available to him by Mr. J.L.M. Maduro. Mr. Maduro, however, was interested only in those parts of the records relating to the Jews of Curaçao, ignoring the rest. In Hartog’s study on the history of Curaçao\(^{22}\) appears the full text of the charter or rules and regulations for the Jewish patronship of Joseph Nunes de Fonseca. Hartog states that they were discovered by Maduro in the Curaçao Papers at the New York State Library in Albany and that Maduro had provided him with a copy. Isaac and Suzanna A. Em-

\(^{19}\) Brodhead states this in his report published in *New York State Senate Documents*, No. 47, February 26, 1845, page 9.


\(^{21}\) G.J. van Grol, *De grondpolitiek in het Westindisch domein der generaliteit*, (’s-Gravenhage, 1934–47) 3 volumes.

\(^{22}\) Johannes Hartog, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Antillen* (Oranjestad, 1956–64) 5 volumes.
I

The Curaçao Papers represent a unique volume in the series New Netherland Documents. It is the first time that two editors have been involved in such a production, and it is the first time that the Dutch text has been published from a volume of records in the “Dutch Colonial Manuscripts.” Past volumes

24 See “The Jews in Curaçao” in Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, X (1902): 141–58. Cone used for his article an unpublished translation by Adriaen vander Kemp. Cone not only published the patroon charter, but also several letters.
28 With the publication of the Curaçao Papers by Heart of the Lakes Publishing the old series title New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch has been changed to New Netherland Documents.
in the series have appeared only in English translation because the cost of doubling the size of a volume by including the Dutch text was considered prohibitive. Also, they were intended primarily for American researchers. However, the Curaçao Papers are not just another volume in “Dutch Colonial Manuscripts” held by the New York State Archives. They also represent the earliest records of territories still administered by the Netherlands, and it was considered appropriate that the records appear in their original text, which will be required by Dutch researchers. It also seemed appropriate that a volume dedicated to Her Majesty Queen Beatrix and the Dutch people appear with the Dutch text from which the English translation was made.

However, this dual-language volume has given rise to dual complications. The major problem was whether the dual language texts should also be accompanied by a dual-language scholarly apparatus, including two introductions, two sets of annotations and two indexes. Such a dual apparatus was not considered necessary, for all Dutch researchers are fluent in English. Thus for the sake of economy and a less cluttered format the decision was made to use English in all front and back matter with the exception of the headnotes and explanatory footnotes in the Dutch text. The calendar of manuscripts, which directly precedes the English translations, lists the manuscript number followed by a short description of the contents. The page number of each item is given for both the English and Dutch texts, making it possible to locate index references in the Dutch transcriptions by identifying the manuscript number in the English text and finding the page number of the Dutch counterpart in the calendar. Although the Dutch items carry headnotes to compensate for the English oriented apparatus, the English items carry only the manuscript numbers, relying on the calendar to serve as a descriptive device.

The translation adheres to the format and style of the original as much as possible. Empty brackets indicate loss in the original caused by the 1911 fire or previous damage; the amount of space between the brackets approximates the amount of loss. Material printed within brackets indicates loss in the original which has been recovered from translations made before the 1911 fire. The only source of such pre-fire translations from the Curaçao Papers is E.B. O’Callaghan’s collection of papers relating to the slave ship St. Jan.29

The Dutch text follows American principles of transcription. Abbreviations have been expanded only when indicated by brackets, except for the frequently used Comp. which has been expanded to Compagnie without in-

29 Voyages of the Slavers St. John and Arms of Amsterdam, translated by E.B. O’Callaghan (Albany, 1867).
dication. Proper names appear exactly as they do in the original; no attempt has been made to modernize or regularize such names. Obvious scribal errors have been silently corrected. The format of the original manuscripts has been maintained as much as possible; alterations have been indicated in footnotes.
The history of Dutch interest in the Delaware region begins with the establishment of a settlement on High Island (present-day Burlington Island) in 1624. It was the original intention of the West India Company (WIC) to make this Delaware settlement the administrative center of New Netherland, with Fort Orange on the upper Hudson and Fort Good Hope on the Connecticut serving mainly as trading posts. According to the instructions given to Willem Verhulst, director of New Netherland from 1625 to 1626, most of the incoming colonists were to be settled on High Island, which the WIC directors considered more suitable for supporting a large number of families than areas to the north. Their reasoning was probably based on inaccurate reports which described the climate in the Delaware as temperate and essentially devoid of winter. However, the new director in 1626 was Peter Minuit, who had spent the previous year in New Netherland and was acquainted with the colony from north to south. His knowledge that the Delaware River frequently froze in the winter, leaving the settlement on High Island isolated for months, must have influenced his decision to establish the center of New Netherland on Manhattan. The island had a natural harbor free of ice in winter, could be easily defended, and was large enough for a major settlement with supporting farms. When the commander at Fort Orange, Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, became involved in an Indian war which threatened the security of all outlying settlements, Minuit called all the families from the upper Hudson, Connecticut, and Delaware regions into Manhattan.

In order to maintain possession of the Delaware and control of the trade with the Minquas Indians, the Dutch built Fort Nassau shortly after abandoning the settlement on High Island. The fort was located on the east side of the river opposite present-day Philadelphia. This fort and trading post was maintained until 1651 when it and Fort Beversreede on the Schuyl Kill were abandoned in favor of Fort Casimir.

The next attempt by the Dutch to establish a settlement in the Delaware region was made in 1631. According to the patroonship plan of colonization under the WIC charter of Freedoms and Exemptions in 1629, any investor, or combination of investors (mostly directors of the Company), was allowed to negotiate for land with the Indians in New Netherland and plant a colony with hereditary rights. One of the areas selected for this form of coloniza-
tion was the west side of Delaware Bay, approximately the site of present-day Lewes. Because the bay region was reported to be potentially rich in whale oil as a result of the numerous whales which entered the bay each year, several directors of the WIC purchased land from the Indians with the intention of settling colonists to support a sperm oil industry. In the spring of 1631, twenty-eight men were put ashore on the newly purchased land, forming the vanguard of the patroonship named Swanendael. This colony on the bay, however, was as short-lived as the settlement on High Island. In the following year, as a result of a series of misunderstandings with the Indians, the colonists were killed to a man while working in the fields. Although all plans for establishing a patroonship on Delaware Bay died with the destruction of Swanendael, the fact that the Dutch had settled in the area one year before Lord Baltimore was granted a charter for Maryland was to be significant in countering future English claims to the Delaware, and a factor in settling a boundary dispute between Maryland and Pennsylvania. The Company continued the trading post at Fort Nassau in order to maintain its claim to the Delaware, but after the Swanendael tragedy it made no further attempts to colonize the region.

The first permanent colony on the Delaware was established by the Swedes under the direction of a former WIC official. Several years after Peter Minuit was discharged from the Company’s service he was hired by Sweden to lead an expedition to the Delaware with the objective of forming a trading colony in the New World. Minuit was well suited for the position since he was acquainted with the area and knew that the Dutch could not contest a Swedish settlement in such a remote area. In the spring of 1638, Minuit landed the first settlers at the site of present-day Wilmington. He purchased land from the natives, which extended from the Schuyl Kill to Boomptjes Hokeck [Bombay Hook], and began the construction of Fort Christina. During his return to Sweden several months later he was lost at sea while visiting the captain of a Dutch ship in the Caribbean.

The Dutch were forced to co-exist with New Sweden at first because of a lack of means to enforce their claim to the Delaware. Willem Kieft, director of New Netherland from 1638 to 1647, even allied himself once with the Swedes in aborting an attempt by Englishmen from New Haven to establish settlements on the Schuyl Kill near present-day Salem, New Jersey. This period of coexistence allowed the Swedes to reinforce their colony and expand it to the east side of the river. Under the direction of Governor Johan Prints, a veteran Thirty Years’ War commander, the Swedes built Fort Elsenburgh at the mouth of the Varkens Kill (present-day Salem Creek) in Delaware Bay,
obstructing the Dutch at Fort Nassau in their access to the sea. Within a decade the Swedes were able to dominate trade with the Minquas by establishing trading posts on the west side of the river, which, in effect, neutralized Fort Nassau. Although the Swedes had an early advantage in this chess game on the Delaware, they were soon to be checked and mated by Petrus Stuyvesant.

When Stuyvesant assumed the position of director-general of New Netherland and the Caribbean possessions in 1647, he requested information on Swedish activities on the Delaware. After fruitless attempts to reestablish trade with the Minquas by constructing trading posts on the west side of the river, Stuyvesant decided to outflank New Sweden. In 1651, with a demonstration of strong military force, he dismantled Fort Nassau and constructed a fort at Sand Hoeck, a few miles south of Fort Christina. This new Dutch stronghold, named Fort Casimir by Stuyvesant, was not only in a position to challenge Swedish domination of the fur trade but also gave the Dutch control of the river. The Swedes, under the command of Governor Johan Rising, countered this move by capturing Fort Casimir on Trinity Sunday, 1654. The Swedes renamed it Fort Trefaldighet [Trinity] and retained possession of it and the river until August of 1655 when Stuyvesant, with a strong military force supported by de Waegh, a man-of-war belonging to the City of Amsterdam, recaptured Fort Casimir and besieged Fort Christina. Within a week New Sweden was brought under Dutch control, providing New Netherland with firmly established settlements on the Delaware.

In 1657, the Company settled its debt to the City of Amsterdam for the loan of de Waegh by transferring the area on the Delaware from Christina Kill to Boomptjes Hoeck to the Mayors of Amsterdam. The City planned to settle and exploit this area on the Delaware as its own colonial venture in the New World. The Company retained control of the territory from Christina Kill to the Schuyl Kill (where the majority of the Swedish settlements were located) and from Boomptjes Hoeck to Cape Henlopen. Fort Christina was renamed Altena by the Company, and the City christened their colony New Amstel.

The first director of the City’s colony was Jacob Alrichs, an old WIC official with experience in Brazil. His tenure in New Amstel began in 1657 and continued until his death in 1659. Alrichs was hampered throughout his administration by land controversies, by colonists intent on living off the City’s stores, and by superiors in the fatherland who expected instant results on meager means.

Alrichs was succeeded by Alexander d’Hinojossa, a former WIC military
officer in Brazil, who quickly established himself as a harsh and uncompro-
mising commander. His severe rule caused many colonists to flee either to
Maryland or into WIC territory north of Christina Kill. In addition to his
disruptive policies within New Amstel, he also clashed with the Company
at Altena over jurisdictional rights in the region. In spite of d'Hinojossa, the
City’s colony of New Amstel began to flourish. A lucrative trade was estab-
lished with tobacco planters in Maryland, who found it profitable to circum-
vent English taxes by using the Dutch as middlemen, and friction with the
Company ceased when the whole Delaware region was transferred to the
City in 1663. This new atmosphere of external and internal peace promoted
the growth of the colony to such an extent that New Amstel was on the verge
of becoming a profitable venture for Amsterdam. In addition to a group of
Mennonite colonists who had already been settled at the Hoere Kill under
the leadership of Pieter Cornelisiz Plockoy, the City had over 200 colonists
ready to embark for New Amstel when news reached the Netherlands of the
English takeover of New Netherland in 1664.

This volume of Dutch records pertaining to the administration of the
Delaware region of New Netherland comprises translations of Volumes
XVIII and XIX of the “Colonial Manuscripts” in the New York State Ar-
chives. The volume numbers represent Edmund Bailey O’Callaghan’s re-ar-
rangement of the original Dutch records for his Calendar of Historical Man-
uscripts published in 1865. According to a catalogue of the records compiled
in 1820 at the Office of the Secretary of State of New York, the record books
which O’Callaghan selected for these two volumes of “Delaware Papers”
were as follows: “No. 18, Book marked ‘R’ containing letters from the South
River, from 20 January 1649 to 1 February 1664;” “No. 19, Book marked ‘S’
much mutilated and decayed, containing letters from Jacob Alrichs to Petrus
Stuyvesant from 1657 to 1659;” and “No. 33, Book marked ‘FF’ in a state of
decay, containing the capitulations of Fort Casimir and Fort Christina, and
other curious matter.” In brief, these three record books which constitute
the “Delaware Papers” for the Dutch period contain the following collec-
tion of documents generated in the Delaware and sent to New Amsterdam:
papers relating to problems with the Swedes, including a report on Swed-
ish activities prior to Stuyvesant’s arrival in New Netherland; extracts from
Stuyvesant’s letter book pertaining to the Delaware from 1648 to 1650, and
papers concerning the takeover of New Sweden in 1655; the council minutes
of Jean Paul Jacquet, vice-director of the South River until 1657; a series of
letters from the director of New Amstel, Jacob Alrichs, to Stuyvesant from
1657 until Alrichs’ death in 1659; and the letters of Willem Beeckman, vice-director of the WIC territory on the South River from 1659 to 1664. Because Stuyvesant’s copybooks containing his letters to Jacob Alrichs and Willem Beeckman have not survived, the “Delaware Papers” preserve only a one-way correspondence from the South River to New Amsterdam. Also lacking for a complete record of Dutch administration on the Delaware are the papers of Jacob Alrichs and Alexander d’Hinojossa during their tenures as directors of New Amstel from 1657 to 1664.

When Alrichs died in 1659 his papers were seized by d’Hinojossa, who succeeded to the command of New Amstel. Alrich’s nephew, Cornelis van Gezel, sued for the release of the papers as executor of the former director’s estate; however, it was not until 1662 that d’Hinojossa yielded to legal pressure and turned the records over to either Stuyvesant or van Gezel’s wife, Anna Catharina Ram. Stuyvesant was subsequently instructed by the directors of the WIC to send the papers to the commissioners in Amsterdam who were in charge of New Amstel so that they could complete an audit of Alrichs’ administration. It is not known whether the papers were actually sent to the Netherlands, and if so, whether they have survived. With regard to the records of the administration of Alexander d’Hinojossa, they were probably either destroyed during the siege of Fort New Amstel or seized by the English after the capture of the City’s colony in 1664.

The earliest attempt to translate the “Delaware Papers” was made by Adri-aen van der Kemp. Between the years 1818 and 1822 he completed a manuscript translation of the twenty-three volumes of Dutch records. Although van der Kemp’s translation never appeared in printed form, his forty bound volumes of translations kept at the New York State Library were used by nineteenth-century historians as the only means of access to the original records of New Netherland. These translations were drawn upon extensively by E. B. O’Callaghan for his two-volume History of New Netherland and for the Annals of Pennsylvania, by Samuel Hazard. Van der Kemp’s translations were always cited in secondary sources as “Albany Records,” indicating their location and not their contents.

While O’Callaghan was preparing his Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, he noted numerous errors and omissions in the forty volumes of translations. In his preface to the Calendar he suggested that a new translation be undertaken. Following his own advice, O’Callaghan began a new translation upon completing the Calendar in 1865. Before his death in 1880 he had translated the first four volumes of the Dutch records, in addition to the
“Hudde Report” (18:1) from the “Delaware Papers.” As with van der Kemp’s work, however, O’Callaghan’s translations were never printed and remain in manuscript form at the New York State Library. The 1911 Capitol fire destroyed all but two volumes of van der Kemp’s translations, but O’Callaghan’s translations survived with only minor damage.

The next effort to translate the “Delaware Papers” was undertaken by O’Callaghan’s successor, Berthold Fernow. Rather than continuing to translate the Dutch records in sequence, as O’Callaghan did in the first four volumes, Fernow viewed the Dutch records geographically. His plan was to separate the manuscripts in the twenty-three volumes of records into the three major geographical regions of New Netherland: the Delaware, the Hudson, and Long Island. Fernow was so rigid in this conception that he split up correspondence, paragraph by paragraph, according to the region involved. In many cases all three volumes have to be consulted in order to reconstruct a single letter. Fernow’s three volumes of translations were published as a continuation of O’Callaghan’s eleven-volume series entitled Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York. Volume XII contains records relating to the Delaware region, with Volumes XIII and XIV covering the Hudson region and Long Island respectively. Fernow altered the title slightly by substituting Relating to for O’Callaghan’s Relative to.

Although Fernow translated most of the Dutch manuscripts in Volumes XVIII and XIX for his volume relating to the Delaware, they were not used in the present publication because of the numerous errors in his translations. However, Fernow’s translations were resorted to in order to recover portions of the manuscripts damaged or lost as a result of the 1911 Capitol fire. These translations are enclosed in brackets; portions damaged or lost before the fire are represented by empty brackets with the space between them approximating the amount of material lost. In those places where there are blanks in the Dutch original because of the inability of a secretary to decipher another secretary’s handwriting, the designation [left blank] is used. Titles supplied by the translator are enclosed in brackets, preceded by the volume and document number relating to the arrangement of manuscripts in O’Callaghan’s Calendar. Multiple manuscripts listed in the Calendar, under a single document number have been preceded by the letter values a, b, c, etc. O’Callaghan’s Calendar can be used as a guide to the “Delaware Papers” with the exception of a few manuscripts which had to be re-ordered because of erroneously interpreted dates. The translator has attempted to remain true to the style of language in each document, which ranges from the formal style of Jacob Alrichs to the casual writings of Willem Beeckman. The map of
the Delaware River and Bay in this volume is provided for orientation purposes only. For cartographic details of the region in the seventeenth century consult the maps in *The Swedish Settlements on the Delaware, 1638–1664*, by Amandus Johnson, New York, 1911; and *Dutch Explorers, Traders and Settlers in the Delaware Valley, 1609–1664*, by C. A. Weslager, Philadelphia, 1961.
Volumes XX & XXI

Delaware Papers (English Period), 1664–1682

Preface

The historian’s view of New York’s colonial administration of the Delaware region has long been distorted because of Volume XII of Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York. This haphazard selection of records compiled by Berthold Fernow is marred by unsatisfactory translations from the Dutch and inaccurate transcriptions of English. With this present publication, however, we now have an accurate work containing complete texts of all documents in the New York Colonial Secretary’s file of Delaware papers from the English period, 1664–1682. Two volumes for the Dutch period, 1646–1664, are in preparation. With these records the historian will have a wealth of material concerning the earliest history of Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey in a complete and accurate edition.

These volumes were prepared by a scholar who is well qualified for the task. Charles T. Gehring studied Germanic linguistics at the University of Freiburg, Germany, and at Indiana University. His doctoral dissertation, “The Dutch Language in Colonial New York,” shows the relationship between social and linguistic change, and demonstrates his area of specialization. He further developed his knowledge of the Dutch language as a research assistant at the Royal Dialect Institute in Amsterdam, Holland. In addition to his academic training, he has added to his knowledge of the social and economic history of colonial New York by serving as museum administrator of the Fort Klock Historic Association and project director in the study of colonial agriculture. His writings concerning the colonial records have appeared in such journals as New York History and Staten Island Historian, and he is presently completing a new translation of the journal kept by Harmen Myn-dertsz van der Bogaert during an expedition up the Mohawk River in 1635.

Dr. Gehring has been working with the colonial manuscripts at the New York State Library for the past two years. He and the library staff have delved deeply into the history of the Delaware region, searching major works and obscure journals for information on such diverse topics as geography, law, medicine, farming, and religion. Dr. Gehring has also examined manuscript collections at other institutions throughout the middle Atlantic states as well
as microfilm copies of records acquired by the State Library from agencies in The Netherlands and England. The library’s collection of major multi-volume Dutch and English dictionaries was essential in determining the seventeenth-century meaning of terms, as were numerous texts in the library annotated by A. J. F. van Laer during his long career as translator of colonial records. The preparation of this edition involved six months of careful scrutiny of the manuscripts. The transcribing, translating, typing, and indexing were continually reviewed and revised by comparison of the original records.

For the library staff, the hard work that went into this volume was often alleviated by the opportunity to read of the joys and tribulations of the irrepressible settlers on the Delaware. We hope that others will share our interest in the human insights that these records provide.

Peter R. Christoph
Associate Librarian
Manuscripts and History
New York State Library
Introduction

The geographical shape of seventeenth-century New York bears little resemblance to the present boundaries of New York State. In 1664 Charles II granted an expanse of territory in North America to his brother James, Duke of York, which included Maine from the St. Croix River to the Kennebec River, all the land between the west bank of the Connecticut River and the east bank of the Delaware River and Bay, as well as Manhattan, Long Island, Martha’s or Martin’s Vineyard, and Nantucket. With the exception of the latter two islands and the territory in Maine, the boundaries of the grant coincided with the Dutch colony of New Netherland, which the English now intended to eliminate.

The principal settlement in the Delaware region at this time was located approximately halfway between Trenton Falls and Cape Henlopen. This upriver area, which was later named New Castle by the English, was first settled in 1651 when Petrus Stuyvesant, Director-General of New Netherland, ordered the erection of Fort Casimir at the Sand Hook in order to cut off the fur trade of the Swedes, who had scattered settlements from Christina Creek (Wilmington) to the Schuylkill (Philadelphia). Three years later Fort Casimir fell to the Swedes and was renamed Fort Trefaldighet (Trinity). In 1655 Stuyvesant led another expedition to the South River, as the Dutch called the Delaware region, during which he succeeded not only in retaking Fort Casimir but also in conquering all of New Sweden. Shortly thereafter the Dutch West India Company transferred control of most of the Delaware region to the City of Amsterdam. This was done not only to repay the city for its assistance during the late expedition against New Sweden, but also because the company realized that it no longer had the resources to settle the area. Amsterdam’s colony, called New Amstel, came to an end less than a decade later with the seizure of the Delaware River and Bay for the Duke of York.

Several months before the English takeover of New Netherland in August, 1664, James granted a deed to Sir George Carteret and John Lord Berkeley for the territory that is now the state of New Jersey. This grant, in effect, ceded control of the Delaware trade to these two loyal supporters of the Stuarts and reduced the size of the Duke’s future proprietary by one-third. Soon after the seizure of New Amsterdam by Richard Nicolls, first governor of New York, an expeditionary force commanded by Sir Robert Carr was sent to the Delaware region. Since the articles of surrender signed by Stuyvesant pertained only to the territory controlled by the Dutch West India Company,
New Amstel in Delaware had to be dealt with separately. Carr’s instructions were to reduce the place and summon the inhabitants “to yield Obedience to his majestie as the rightful Sovereign of that Tract of land.”1 These inhabitants, however, were living in settlements scattered along the west bank of the Delaware River and Bay, on land actually claimed by Lord Baltimore of Maryland. Baltimore had made only feeble attempts to eject the Dutch because of his weak situation in Maryland, and because the tobacco merchants there found it profitable to circumvent English duties by dealing directly with the Dutch traders in New Amstel.

After Carr seized control of the Delaware region by reducing New Amstel on the west bank, Nicolls anticipated that Baltimore would now assert his claim to the area. With this in mind he suggested to his superiors in England that Baltimore’s rights to the region be considered “forfeited by act of Parliament for trading with the Dutch, or at least so much of his patent as hath been reduc’d at His Majesty’s charge.”2 Nicolls’s instructions to Carr also convey an awareness of the possibility of conflict with Baltimore’s claim to the region, since Carr was instructed to inform Charles Calvert, Lord Baltimore’s son and governor of Maryland, that he (Carr) had orders to keep possession of the region, but “if My Lord Baltimore doth pretend right thereunto by his Patent (which is a doubtful Case) you are to say that you only keep possession till his Majesty is informed and sattisyed otherwise.”3 Thus the west bank of the Delaware River and Bay came under the control of New York at the expense of Lord Baltimore.

The English conquest of New Amstel did not proceed as smoothly, however, as that of New Amsterdam. The City of Amsterdam’s director in New Amstel, Alexander d’Hinijossa, defended the fort with less than fifty men until the situation was hopeless, suffering thirteen casualties before the fort fell. After the surrender, Carr allowed his troops to plunder the houses and stores within the stockade. With the river firmly in English hands, Carr’s attention then turned to Pieter Cornelisz Plockoy’s Mennonite colony at the Whorekill near Cape Henlopen. Although there is no record of a defense, the English soldiers plundered and took possession of all effects belonging to Amsterdam and to Plockoy’s colony “to a very naile.”4

The severity of the initial English occupation was not followed by a harsh military rule, as the inhabitants of the Delaware region might have expected.

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1 20:1a
2 PA 5:542.
3 20:1a.
4 NYCD 3:345
The Dutch magistrates were to continue in office and were allowed to exercise their civil power as before: the schout, burgomasters, and other minor officials were to hold their offices for six months or until further notice. The magistrates were, however, to be subordinate to the English commander. In 1668 Capt. John Carr, who replaced Sir Robert Carr as commander in Delaware, received instructions from New York to continue the civil government until further orders; also, “That the Lawes of the government Establisht by his Royall Highness be shewed and frequently Communicated to the said Councillors and all others to the end that being there acquainted the practise of them may also in Convenient tyme be established. . . .” This order was issued in anticipation of extending the “Duke’s Laws” to the Delaware region. These laws had been in force on Long Island, Staten Island, and in Westchester since 1665, but were not extended to Delaware until 1676. In the interim the magistrates at New Castle, Upland, and the Whorekill continued to administer justice according to forms more Dutch than English. Such accommodations to the predominately non-English population were probably made in realization that the continuance of familiar procedures might reduce the possibility of unrest.

A major step in the transition to English institutions was taken in 1672 when the government in New York ordered that New Castle be converted into a bailiwick and that English laws be established in all settlements on the Delaware. The office of schout was to be replaced with a shrievalty, and the town court was to have the power to try all cases of debt or damage below the value of £10 without appeal to New York. Thus New Castle became the principal court in Delaware, holding monthly sessions, while the courts at Upland and the Whorekill met quarterly.

For nine years the west bank of the Delaware region remained under the control of the central government in New York. In 1673 the Dutch recaptured their former colony, including the Delaware, only to lose it again the following year as a result of the Treaty of Westminster. Charles II immediately reaffirmed his brother’s proprietorship to New York, and the former Dutch claim to the west bank of the Delaware reverted to New York as well. In the meantime, John Lord Berkeley had sold his share of New Jersey to the Quakers Edward Byllynge and John Fenwick. Carteret had agreed to a partition that left him the region of East New Jersey, while the land west of a diagonal line, running from Little Egg Harbor to the Delaware River,

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5 20: 1b  
6 PA 5:573  
7 20:29/30
was to be settled by the Quakers. Upon repossessing New York, James restored Carteret's claim to his share of New Jersey, east of the diagonal line, but refused to acknowledge Berkeley's sale to Byllynge and Fenwick. When the Duke's authority was re-established in New York, the east bank of the Delaware in West New Jersey was considered to be part of the Duke's territory. The east bank of the river and bay remained under New York's control until 1680, when the Duke of York finally recognized Byllynge's claim. Thus for six years all the land bordering Delaware River and Bay was administered by New York.

When the Duke of York regained control of his territory in 1674, he ordered governor-designate Edmund Andros to restore those laws and orders instituted by previous English governors of New York. Andros was also ordered to extend the “Duke's Laws” to all settlements in New York, which included both sides of Delaware River and Bay. The following spring he visited the Delaware region to dramatize the re-establishment of the Duke's authority. While there he attended a special court session in New Castle during which his commission was read and the local magistrates were sworn. Since the “Duke's Laws” were to be enforced in all settlements, he promised to send the court a copy of the laws as soon as possible. Instead of sending the laws, however, Andros waited a year before sending twelve “rules of government” that were to be followed by the local magistrates, including the order that “the books of laws Establisht by his Royall Highnesse, and practiced in New Y ork… be likewise in force and practiced in this River and Precincts…. ” Still no copy of the “Duke's Laws” was available for use in Delaware. One was finally sent to New Castle in October, 1678. The reason for this delay of nearly four years is unknown.

In addition to the courts at New Castle, Upland, and the Whorekill, two new courts were established in 1677 on the east side of the river in order to accommodate the influx of Quakers at Burlington and Salem. These courts, however, were subordinate to the New Castle court, where appeals were heard for cases above £5 in value. In 1680 another court was established at St. Jones (now Dover, Delaware) after the inhabitants, mainly planters from Virginia and Maryland, complained of the hardships in reaching the Whorekill court.

During the Duke of York's possession of the Delaware region, three governors administered affairs from Fort James in New York City. Richard Nicolls,

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8 NYCD 3:218.  
9 NYCD 3:226.  
10 20: 98.
the first governor, was a member of the Duke’s commission together with Sir Robert Carr, Samuel Maverick and George Cartwright. This commission was formed ostensibly to hear complaints in New England, but its primary mission was the overthrow of New Netherland. Nicolls was followed in 1668 by Francis Lovelace, who returned to England in debt and disgrace after the recapture of New Netherland by the Dutch in 1673. When the English re-established control over New York in 1674, Edmund Andros became the last New York governor to administer the Delaware region as part of New York. Anthony Brockholls served as deputy governor during Andros’s visits to England in 1678 and 1681. Although the three administrations were as different in character as was the temperament of each governor, an administrative continuity was maintained throughout by the retention of Matthias Nicolls as provincial secretary.

Nicolls, one of the key figures in the early years of English rule in New York, was described by Samuel Maverick in 1663 as a person who “hath beene bred a scholar, and a student in Lincolnes Inne, and a good proficient as by many I have beene informed, and had he had now tyme, he could have brought Certificates from some sariants (savants) at law and other eminent persons, by what I have heard and seene, I most humbly Conceive he may be fitt for a secretary to the Commissioners…. ”11 After the takeover of New Netherland in 1664, Nicolls was appointed provincial secretary by Richard Nicolls (no relation) and remained in this office until 1680. During his tenure as secretary he was also a member of the provincial council, served as a presiding judge on the court of assizes, was twice appointed mayor of New York City, held a captaincy in a militia company, and was frequently appointed to special commissions. In addition to holding numerous offices, Nicolls is reputed to be the compiler and codifier of the “Duke’s Laws” (1665) and the author of the “Charter of Libertyes” (1683). His knowledge of English law, his experience acquired as secretary and member of the provincial council, and his wide friendships with such colonial leaders as the Winthrops in Connecticut made Nicolls one of the most influential and indispensable men in the central government.

As provincial secretary, Nicolls maintained files of all outgoing and incoming correspondence and papers. Copies of letters, orders, warrants, commissions, and passes for the Delaware region were recorded in his “General Entries Book,” while papers received from the various jurisdictions in Delaware were bundled together and marked as “Delaware Papers.” It is uncertain whether Nicolls filed the papers of other regions and jurisdictions in New

11 New York Historical Society Collections, 2:57 (1869.)
York separately in this manner. When E. B. O’Callaghan arranged the New York Colonial Manuscripts, then stored in the Secretary of State’s Office, he may have retained this regional designation for papers related to Delaware since the area was no longer a part of New York. In any case, O’Callaghan’s arrangement brings together the papers related to the Delaware region in a continuous series of manuscripts, from the beginning of the Dutch period through the period of English rule.

Volumes 20 and 21 of the New York Colonial Manuscripts, relating to the English period on the Delaware, do not, however, form a continuous historical record of judicial and administrative proceedings; rather, they consist of correspondence, reports, petitions, accounts, survey-returns, and copies of local court proceedings that were sent by official or private persons to the central government at Fort James. Among the papers are also copies of letters, orders, warrants, instructions, and patent records concerning the Delaware region that Nicolls retained for his files. The papers sent from the various jurisdictions in Delaware to Fort James comprise more than two-thirds of the manuscripts in volumes 20 and 21, representing court cases on appeal or suits outside the responsibility of the local courts. These volumes, therefore, do not contain the complete records of the Delaware region, but rather the central government’s judicial and administrative contact with this remote area. In order to understand the local context of these “Delaware Papers,” the records of the various courts in the Delaware region should be consulted.

The records of most of the courts in Delaware have survived starting from 1676, and many are available in print. Volume I of Records of the Court of New Castle on Delaware, 1676–1681 was published in 1904 by The Colonial Society of Pennsylvania; and Volume II (1681–1699), consisting of extracts from the court records concerning land titles and probate proceedings, was published in 1935. The “Record of the Upland Court, 1676–1681” appears in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania Memoirs, Volume VII (1860). Records for the Whorekill appear in Some Records of Sussex County, Delaware, compiled by C. H. B. Turner (Philadelphia, 1909). These records begin in 1681, when the Whorekill had been renamed Deale County, and end in 1694. Records for the St. Jones court are published in the American Legal Records series as Volume VIII under the title Court Records of Kent County, Delaware 1680–1705 (Washington, 1959). Records for the courts on the east side of the river are rather fragmentary. These courts either did not keep systematic records, since they were subordinate to the New Castle court, or if they did the records have not survived. Records for Burlington begin in 1680, after
Byllynge’s proprietorship to West Jersey was recognized by the Duke of York. These records are published in the American Legal Records series as Volume V under the title Burlington Court Book of West New Jersey 1680–1709 (Washington, 1944). For the Salem court there are only a few fragments of proceedings which are calendared in Archives of the State of New Jersey, Volume XXI, 1899.

Records preceding the Dutch repossession in 1673 have not survived at the local level. The only remnants from this period are those copies of proceedings and references to local affairs in the Delaware Papers.

After the re-establishment of the Duke’s control over New York in 1674, William Tom was commissioned clerk or secretary at New Castle. He had come to the Delaware with Sir Robert Carr’s invasion force in 1664 and was probably Capt. John Carr’s secretary from 1666 to 1673. When Tom was replaced as secretary by Ephraim Herman in 1676, his records were found to be deficient. They were sent to New York for examination but were returned the following year with the admonition that Tom put his records in order, since the council in New York could make no sense of them. Tom died a few months later and the whereabouts of his “twoo small old paper bookes” is unknown. The loss of these records leaves a gap of almost two years in the court proceedings for New Castle and Upland. The Delaware Papers fill in part of this gap with copies of the more important of those proceedings that were sent to New York either on appeal or by order of the council. They include subjects ranging in importance from the 1675 New Castle riot, to a complaint over the discovery of a stone in a bag of feathers. Local records for the Whorekill begin with 1680, leaving even a larger gap than the one for New Castle and Upland. When Cornelis Verhoofe, the secretary of the Whorekill court, was removed from office in 1681 for various offenses, he refused to turn his records over to the new secretary. The local sheriff was ordered to search for the records, and if they could not be located, Verhoofe was to appear before the Court of Assizes in New York. As with William Tom, Verhoofe died soon thereafter and his records have also been lost. Copies of those court proceedings at the Whorekill, which Verhoofe had sent to New York, have also been preserved in the Delaware Papers, whereas the minor or petty cases, which were disposed of locally, have been lost. The Delaware Papers, therefore, enable the historian to recover at least a class of the official records of this region for a period which would be otherwise undocumented.

In 1850 E. B. O’Callaghan began the enormous task of organizing the piles of manuscripts stored in the Secretary of State’s Office, which now constitute
the Colonial Manuscripts of New York. He had them bound in large folio volumes with title pages and identification numbers for each manuscript. In 1865–66 his *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts* was printed, and has for years served as the means of access to this indispensable source for the colonial history of New York. O’Callaghan’s arrangement of the manuscripts in volumes 20 and 21 has here been maintained in order to preserve the usefulness of his calendar as a guide. The “Calendar of Manuscripts” printed in this volume is not intended to supersede O’Callaghan’s but rather to facilitate access to those manuscripts cross-referenced by document number, and to correct errors found in O’Callaghan’s calendar.

Many of the manuscripts transcribed and translated for this volume have suffered damage both as a result of the 1911 State Capitol fire and through neglect. Wherever possible, missing or damaged portions have been recovered from contemporary manuscript copies or from transcriptions made before the fire. All recovered portions are identified by brackets, and the source cited by footnote. Other printed transcriptions of the English manuscripts are also cited as well as the locations of final drafts of papers and letters sent by Matthias Nicolls to the Delaware. In some cases Berthold Fernow’s well-known transcriptions in Volume XII of *NYCD* (see key to abbreviations at the end of the *Introduction*) were not used as a source because they were found to be unreliable, especially wherever it was clear that the manuscript was damaged before the fire. Fernow frequently supplied words in damaged portions by conjecture, without citation; in some instances his interpolations are quite different from contemporary copies of documents which have survived in sources unavailable to him. Fernow’s transcriptions in general have proved to be unreliable and should be used with caution. Any damaged portions that could not be recovered from other sources are marked by empty brackets with the space between them approximating the amount of lost material.

Although volumes 20 and 21 of the *Delaware Papers* are from the English period, Dutch continued to be used by officials for a short time after the takeover, and it appears in petitions written by non-English speakers. These Dutch manuscripts are noted in O’Callaghan’s calendar with an asterisk, except for 20:81a and 20:82, which were left unmarked. All the Dutch manuscripts have been translated anew for this volume. Other printed translations of these Dutch manuscripts are cited by footnote; those manuscripts translated by V. H. Paltsits for ECM are accompanied by a transcription of the Dutch text.

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12 See “New York’s Dutch Records” in *New York History* (July 1975) for examples.
The “expanded method” of transcription as outlined in the *Harvard Guide to American History* has been followed for the printing of the English manuscripts: all superior letters brought down to the line of text; abbreviations expanded if the final letter of the word is present; “-con” with a tilde printed “-cion”; the graph “y”, when designating a spirant, replaced by “th-”; the use of “u” and “v” regularized according to modern spelling practices; “ff-” replaced by “F-”; “&” and “&c.” printed as “and” and “etc.”; “tailed-p” expanded to its appropriate form; all personal names capitalized, but otherwise transcribed exactly as they appear in the manuscript; and the Dutch abbreviation for the patronymic marker “-sen” transcribed as “-sz.”

Descriptive titles have been added to all manuscripts that do not carry original titles, and appear in brackets. Original signatures are preceded by the marker [Signed:], and marks in lieu of signatures have been reproduced exactly as they appear in the manuscript. Marginal notations have been indented into the text with a citation of their source wherever possible. Addresses on covers follow the text, as well as all notations and endorsements. All dates have been left unchanged. It should be kept in mind that the English continued to use the Julian Calendar, or “old style,” until 1752, whereas most of the Dutch provinces had adopted the Gregorian Calendar, or “new style,” in the sixteenth century. According to “old style” dating, the new year began on March 25, and in the seventeenth century it was running ten days behind “new style” dating. Sometimes double dates were used for the period between January 1 and March 25, but if only a single date is given and the document is English, then it should be considered “old style.” If the document has been translated from Dutch, then the date will either appear double or should be considered “new style.” In a few cases only comparison with related documents will reveal a document’s true date.

The file copies retained by Matthias Nicolls of correspondence and orders sent to Delaware are often rough drafts of the final document. In most cases the revisions are indicated in footnotes; a few documents, however, were so extensively revised that it was impossible to indicate all the alterations in this way. For these documents the revised version has been used in the body of the text, while the unrevised version appears in the Appendix.
This volume of land papers from the “Colonial Manuscripts” in the New York State Archives comprises translations of three Dutch record books lettered GG, HH and II. Originally each volume of Dutch records was identified by a single or doubled letter; however, when E. B. O’Callaghan compiled his Calendar to the “Colonial Manuscripts,” he decided to rearrange the records both chronologically and according to type. In the process he assigned volume numbers to the series of “Secretary’s Minutes,” “Council Minutes,” “Correspondence,” etc., retaining only the original letter markers of the land papers. Instead of keeping II as a separate volume, O’Callaghan decided to incorporate these land records into HH as “HH, Part 1.” His reasoning apparently was that because GG ends with a patent issued in 1651 and HH begins with a 1654 patent, II would fill the gap between these two volumes since it contains records for the years 1652 and 1653. However, II contains only conveyances for these years while GG and HH are almost exclusively patents. O’Callaghan’s arrangement attains a chronological continuity for the land papers in general, but offers the impression that conveyances were issued for two years only and that these are the only conveyances which exist. In actuality conveyances are recorded elsewhere for a period of almost thirty years. Initially, from 22 July 1638 to 20 June 1652, conveyances were recorded in the minutes of the provincial secretary (volumes I–III of the “Colonial Manuscripts”). However, on 5 September 1652 the secretary began to keep a separate record which he marked II. Conveyances were recorded in this book until 15 October 1653, when once again the secretary began to record them in his minutes (12 April 1654 to 27 July 1658). Overlapping these records in time are the conveyances in the “Records of New Amsterdam” at the New York City clerk’s office, which run from 1653 to 1665. Therefore, separate record books must be consulted in order to determine the chronological continuity of these conveyances. For this reason it has been decided to

1 Calendar of Dutch Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State, ed. Edmund B. O’Callaghan (Albany: 1865).
change “HH, Part 1” back to its original designation as book II, since maintenance of the integrity of the records outweighs any inconvenience in relating “HH, Part 1” in O’Callaghan’s Calendar to the translations in this volume designated “Land Papers: II.”

The reordering of II still leaves a gap of about two years in the patents: GG ends with a patent dated 20 September 1651 and HH begins with one dated 26 February 1654. This hiatus in the land papers may be accounted for in at least two ways. The patents for this period may have been recorded in the book of “Council Minutes” for the years 1650 and 1651, which has been lost. It is also possible that no patents were recorded in the West India Company’s records at New Amsterdam in the years 1652 and 1653. During these years eleven extant patents were issued: nine for the Fort Orange -Beverwyck area and two for Long Island. Originals of these patents survive in various repositories other than the New York State Archives.3 If the official copies of these patents were kept in the records at Fort Orange and Midwout on Long Island they probably would not appear in the records of the West India Company at New Amsterdam.

The land papers in GG and HH are predominantly patents; however, GG also contains “Indian deeds” which record the purchase of land from the natives for the West India Company and several patroons. The first recorded patent is to Andries Hudden for 100 morgens of land, dated 20 July 1638. Up to this time colonists were allowed to “choose and take possession of as much land as they [could] properly cultivate” with the approval of the director and council of New Netherland.4 This concession was granted to private persons under article XXI of the “Freedoms and Exemptions of 1629.” However, on 24 June 1638 the following order was issued by the council:

“Various freemen having petitioned the council for grants of the land which they at present cultivate, the request of the petitioners is granted, provided that at the expiration of ten years after taking possession of their plantations they shall pay yearly to the Company one-tenth of all the produce which God shall grant to the soil; also, for the house and garden from now on yearly one pair of capons.”5

The patents in GG and HH thus allowed private individuals to take possession of land “in freehold” as opposed to the previous policy of only granting

permission to hold land for cultivation.

A first attempt at a translation of the land papers was made in the nineteenth century: in 1826 James Van Ingen completed work on HH and II, and Cornelis D. Westbrook submitted his translation of GG to the Office of the Secretary of State in 1841. Their translations, however, were never published. When Berthold Fernow undertook his series of translations of the “Colonial Manuscripts,” he incorporated many of the patents from GG and HH into his publications. The present volume represents a new and complete translation of the land papers following the exact order in the “Colonial Manuscripts.” Since it would have been repetitious to include the legal stipulations and conditions in every patent and conveyance, the full form is given only once and thereafter abbreviated. The numbers assigned to each document represent the original pagination of the record book. During Kieft’s administration the entire text of the patent was copied, sometimes requiring two pages; while under Stuyvesant many of the patents were abbreviated, allowing the secretary to copy two on one page. This numbering system has been maintained since the land papers are identified in this manner in O’Callaghan’s Calendar and in such standard reference works as Stokes’s Iconography of Manhattan Island. Proper names have been rendered exactly as they appear in the original. Material appearing in brackets has either been supplied by the translator or inferred from other sources.

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The records in this volume represent the oldest surviving archival papers of the Dutch community that eventually became Albany, the capital of the state of New York. Although the Dutch first visited this area with Hudson in 1609, records were first maintained in the area by the officials of the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck, which surrounded the West India Company post of Fort Orange. The administration of the Company's interests in the area remained in the hands of the council on Manhattan for almost thirty years. Thus records concerning the Company’s administration of affairs in this area are found among the minutes of the council on Manhattan or in the registers of the provincial secretary. Local WIC records first appeared in 1652 after the Company established the jurisdiction of Fort Orange and the village of Beverwijck.

Fort Orange/Beverwijck

On April 10, 1652 the West India Company’s jurisdiction of Fort Orange/Beverwijck was formed along the banks of the upper Hudson. This act represented the resolution of a four-year dispute over local sovereignty between Petrus Stuyvesant, the director general of New Netherland and Brant van Slichtenhorst, the director of Rensselaerswijck, the patroonship founded by Kiliaen van Rensselaer. On this date Stuyvesant proclaimed a 3000-foot radius around the fort to be within the jurisdiction of the West India Company; an area which incorporated the bijeenwooningh or “community” established and promoted by Van Slichtenhorst. No longer were Company affairs on the upper Hudson administered from the council on Manhattan. Overnight a local government was established which not only rivaled the patroon’s court in the area but also transformed a considerable number of the patroon’s population into servants of the Company.

The new jurisdiction also included the Esopus and Catskill regions south of the patroonship until a court was established at Wiltwijck (Kingston) in 1660. After the English takeover in 1664, the jurisdiction of the court in Albany (formerly Fort Orange/Beverwijck) was expanded to include Rensselaer...
laerswijck and Schenectady, which was approved for settlement toward the end of Stuyvesant’s administration. During the Dutch restoration of 1673 the name of Albany was changed to Willemstad rather than reverting to the original Beverwijck, while the former Fort Orange, which had become Fort Albany during the English interim period of governors Nicolls and Lovelace, was renamed Fort Nassau. In 1674 New Netherland was returned to English rule as a result of the treaty of Westminster, which closed the third Anglo-Dutch war. During the administration of Governor Edmund Andros, Albany records continued to be kept in Dutch until Governor Dongan granted a charter to the municipality in 1686.

Local Government

The kleine banck van justitie or inferior bench of justice of Fort Orange/Beverwijck was established to function as the local governing body with executive, legislative, and judicial responsibilities. As a local jurisdiction it kept records of its proceedings for future reference. In addition to the minutes of the court, which included ordinary sessions held every Tuesday and occasional extraordinary sessions, records were also kept of various transactions and interactions of members of the community. Such records were cast in the form of a contract requiring the signatures of the parties involved and the attestation of an authorized official. Normally this official would be a notary; however, in the absence of a notary this function was performed by the secretary. The majority of these records consist of real estate transactions, such as conveyances of property from one individual to another, conditions of sale, conditions of auction, surrenders of claims; they also include acknowledgements of debt, warrants, powers of attorney, and pledges of security. Such documents carried authentic signatures and could be submitted as legal instruments in court proceedings.

Officials who appear as signatories in this volume are as follows:

Johannes La Montagne who served as vice director and commissary at Fort Orange from 28 September 1656 to 24 October 1664;

Johannes Provoost who served as clerk under La Montagne, then as secretary of Albany, Colonie, and Rensselaerswijck during the English administration. He also served in this office during the restoration of Dutch rule under Governor Colve, 1673–1674;

Dirk van Schellyne served as notary public in Beverwijck beginning in 1660 and town clerk of Albany;
Ludovicus Cobus served as secretary under the Colve administration; Robert Livingston served as secretary of Albany from September 1675 to 1721.

Local Records

The present volume is the first part of the surviving records kept by the Albany Municipal Archives. As with other surviving Dutch records in other repositories, they are neither complete nor maintained in their original state. In contrast to the Dutch colonial manuscripts kept in the New York State Archives, which suffered greatly in the 1911 Library fire, they are physically in excellent condition. However, over the years they were subjected to other abuses. Jonathan Pearson described the situation best in the preface to his translation of these same records: “The earliest registers were simply quires stitched together, which at a later date were gathered up by some one ignorant of the language, and bound and labeled regardless of dates or subjects.” [Early Records Albany, iii] Over the years these records were stored, ignored, moved, arranged, and rearranged until they finally were put together in bound volumes to which labels were attached. As with humpty dumpty, we are no longer able to return them to their original state, but are now compelled to follow arrangements, which at times seem arbitrary or illogical.

The first two bound volumes are labeled Deeds A and B respectively. Volume A carries the date 1656–1678 on the lower spine; B is dated 1654–1680. This indicates that there was no overriding concern for chronological order; nor was there an apparent concern for proportion as Volume A contains 431 pages while Volume B weighs in at 869 pages. The present translated volume represents Volume A and is subtitled part 1; because of its size, Volume B will appear in two separate translated volumes subtitled part 2 and part 3 of the Fort Orange Records.1 As a result of these chronological displacements the records kept by Johannes Dijckman and Jan de Deckere from 1652 to 1656 will appear in the following two volumes.

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1 This plan was subsequently abandoned, as it was decided to maintain the relative size of the bound originals in the published translations.
Editorial Method

The same editorial principles were followed in this volume as in the *Fort Orange Court Minutes*. The layout or format of the entries was adhered to as closely as possible. Proper names have been transcribed rather than translated in order to give researchers every possible onomastic configuration by which an individual or place was identified in its original form. Name variations and translations of Dutch occupations will appear in the index. Damaged portions are indicated by empty brackets that approximate the amount of loss. Actual document page numbers appears in brackets to facilitate access to the original.
The records in this volume represent the next to the oldest surviving archival papers of the Dutch community that eventually became Albany, the capital of New York state. Although the Dutch presence in this area began with the explorations of the East India Company’s ship the *Halve Maen* in 1609, local records were first maintained by the officials of the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck. Surviving records for this quasi-private entity, surrounding the West India Company’s trading post of Fort Orange, date from 1648 to 1652. However, the administration of the Company’s interests in the area remained in the hands of the council on Manhattan for almost thirty years. Thus records concerning the Company’s administration of affairs in this region are found among the minutes of the council on Manhattan or in the registers of the provincial secretary. Local WIC records first appeared in 1652 after the Company established the jurisdiction of Fort Orange and the village of Beverwijck.

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The new jurisdiction also included the Esopus and Catskill regions south of the patroonship until a court was established at Wiltwijck (Kingston) in 1660. After the English takeover in 1664, the jurisdiction of the court in Albany (formerly Fort Orange/Beverwijck) was expanded to include Rensselaerswijck, as well as Schenectady, which was approved for settlement toward the end of Stuyvesant’s administration. During the Dutch restoration of 1673 the name of Albany was changed to Willemstad rather than reverting to the original Beverwijck, while the former Fort Orange, which had become Fort Albany during the English interim period of governors Nicolls and Lovelace, was renamed Fort Nassau. In 1674 New Netherland was returned to English rule as a result of the treaty of Westminster, which ended the third Anglo-Dutch war. During the administration of Governor Edmund Andros, Albany records continued to be kept in Dutch until Governor Dongan granted a charter to the municipality in 1686.

Local Government

The kleine banck van justitie, or inferior bench of justice, of Fort Orange/Beverwijck was established to function as the local governing body complete with executive, legislative, and judicial responsibilities. As a local jurisdiction it kept records of its proceedings for future reference. In addition to the minutes of the court, which included ordinary sessions held every Tuesday and frequent extraordinary sessions, records were also kept of various transactions and interactions of members of the community. Such records were cast in the form of a contract requiring the signatures of the parties involved and the attestation of an authorized official. Normally this official would be a notary; however, in the absence of a notary this function was performed by the local secretary. The majority of these records consist of real estate transactions, such as conveyances of property from one individual to another, conditions of sale, conditions of auction, surrenders of claims; they also include acknowledgements of debt, inventories of estates, warrants, powers of attorney, and pledges of security. Such documents carried authentic signatures and could be submitted as legal instruments in court proceedings.

Officials who appear as signatories in this volume are as follows:

Joannes Dijckman who served as vice director and commissary at Fort Orange from 10 April 1652 to June 1655;

Johan de Deckere who served as provisional vice director at Fort Orange
from July 1655 to July 1656;
   Johannes La Montagne who served as vice director and commissary at Fort Orange from 28 September 1656 to 24 October 1664;
   Johannes Provoost who served as clerk under La Montagne, then as secretary of Albany, Colonie, and Rensselaerswijck during the English administration from 12 November 1664 to 8 August 1665;
   Dirck van Schelluyne served as notary public in Beverwijck beginning in 1660 and town clerk of Albany from 10 September 1665 to August 9, 1668;
   Ludovicus Cobus served as secretary from September 1668 to 24 October 1673, when Provoost was reinstated in the position until 11 August 1675;
   Robert Livingston served as secretary of Albany from September 1675 to 1721.

Local Records

The present volume is the second part of the surviving records kept by the Albany municipal archives, known as the Hall of Records. As with other surviving Dutch records in other repositories, they are neither complete nor maintained in their original state. In contrast to the Dutch colonial manuscripts, damaged in the 1911 State Library fire, and now kept in the New York State Archives, they are physically in relatively perfect condition. However, over the years they were subjected to other abuses. Jonathan Pearson described the situation best in the preface to his translation of these same records: “The earliest registers were simply quires stitched together, which at a later date were gathered up by some one ignorant of the language, and bound and labeled regardless of dates or subjects.”2 Over the years these records were stored, ignored, moved, arranged, and rearranged until they finally were put together in bound volumes to which labels were attached. As with humpty dumpty, we are no longer able to return them to their original state, but are now compelled to follow arrangements, which at times seem arbitrary or illogical. In some instances groups of documents were bound incorrectly in the 19th century. For example, there are several cases where documents, which end abruptly, have been reunited with their final pages. Unlike volume A this volume has suffered from a lack of attention to chronology when the separate quires and pages were bound.

ume A carries the date 1656–1678 on the lower spine; B is dated 1654–1680. This indicates that there was no overriding concern for chronological order; nor was there an apparent concern for proportion as Volume A contains 431 pages while Volume B weighs in at 869 pages, giving rise to the frequently quoted appellations of “little book” and “big book”. The previously translated volume represents Volume A and is subtitled part 1. Volume B was originally planned to be published in two parts because of its size. However, it was decided to maintain the relative size of the bound originals in the published translations, obviating the need for two separate indexes.

Editorial Method

The same editorial principles were followed in this volume as in the Fort Orange Court Minutes and in Volume A. The layout or format of the entries have been adhered to as closely as possible. Proper names have been transcribed rather than translated in order to give researchers every possible onomastic configuration by which an individual or place was identified in its original form. Name variations and translations of Dutch occupations appear in the index and glossary. Damaged portions are indicated by empty brackets which approximate the amount of loss. Actual document page numbers appear in brackets to facilitate access to the original.
Appendix

Listed below in bold-type are the published translations in the New York Historical Manuscripts / New Netherland Documents series. Beneath each entry is a listing of their manuscript contents. All volume numbers not in bold-type refer to O’Callaghan’s Calendar.

Volume I, Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1638–1642
    Same as Calendar

Volume II, Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1642–1647
    Same as Calendar

Volume III, Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1648–1660
    Same as Calendar

Volume IV, Council Minutes, 1638–1649
    Same as Calendar

Volume V, Council Minutes, 1652–1654
    Same as Calendar

Volume VI, Council Minutes, 1655–1656
    Same as Calendar

Volume XI, Correspondence, 1647–1653
    Same as Calendar

Volume XII, Correspondence, 1654–1658
    Same as Calendar

Volume XVI, part 1, Laws & Writs of Appeal, 1647–1663
    Volume XVI, Part I: Ordinances, 1647–1658
    Volume XVI, Part IV: Writs of Appeal, 1658–1663

Volume XVI, part 2, Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652–1660
    Volume XVI, Part II: Fort Orange Records, 1656–1657
    Volume XVI, Part III: Fort Orange Records, 1660
    Books 1652–56\(^1\) and 1658–1659\(^2\) of minutes stored at the Albany County Hall of Records

Volume XVII, Curacao Papers, 1640–1665

\(^1\) Not in the Calendar.
\(^2\) In the Calendar under Volume XVI, part II, Volume A.
Same as Calendar

**Volumes XVIII & XIX, Delaware Papers, Dutch Period, 1648–1664**
- XVIII, Delaware Papers, 1648–1660
- XIX, Delaware Papers, 1661–1664

**Volumes XX & XXI, Delaware Papers, English Period, 1664–1682**
- XX, Delaware Papers, 1664–1678
- XXI, Delaware Papers, 1679–1682

**Books GG, HH, & II, Land Papers, 1630–1664**
- Books GG, HH, and II³

**Volume A, Fort Orange Records, 1656–1678**
- Volume labeled Deeds A stored at the Albany County Hall of Records⁴

**Volume B, Fort Orange Records, 1654–1679**
- Volume labeled Deeds B stored at the Albany County Hall of Records⁵

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³ O’Callaghan arranged book II as HH, part 1, and book HH as HH, part 2. The translation restablishes the original arrangement.
⁴ Not in the Calendar.
⁵ Ibid.